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JANUARY 13, 2003

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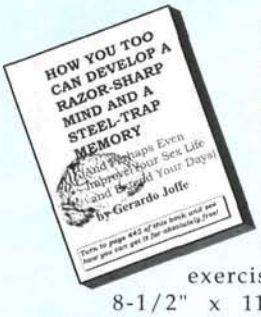

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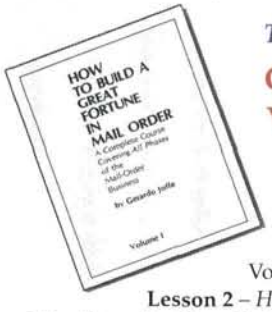

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From the Folks Who Brought Us Ebonics

Over the last several years, we have become accustomed to all manner of pedagogical malpractice from the Oakland Unified School District. In 1996, they introduced the world to Ebonics, angering white and black parents alike who didn't want their children sounding as if they'd learned the queen's English from an episode of *Good Times*. The following year, a single parent who was an amputee and widower living on disability was forced to sue the district when he found out that, unbeknownst to him, his 5-year-old son had been enrolled in a bilingual education class conducted almost entirely in Cantonese (neither father nor son was Chinese).

Now *OpinionJournal.com*'s James Taranto directs our attention to a *Contra Costa Times* report that gives us new reason for dismay—as if we needed more reasons beyond the 25 percent dropout rate. Oakland has launched a School of Social Justice and Community Development. According to the *Times*, in a culture and resistance class taught by rapper Boots Riley (who penned the memorable "5 Million Ways to Kill a CEO," not to mention "Me and Jesus the Pimp in a '79 Granada Last Night"), students are given the assignment of composing raps about the city's addition of 100 police to their force. "Why they want to bring more police in the town / Just for them to attack the black and the brown," went one child's effort.

In English class, students discuss patriarchy and sexism. In science, students are taught about the periodic table by writing a letter to President Bush, pretending they are kidnappers holding an element for ransom, and then listing its chemical and physical properties—along with their demands.

Operating under the district's new autonomous school policy, the social justice school's 124-member student body is largely drawn from group homes, juvenile halls, and dropouts from other public schools. The *Contra Costa Times* reports that what students like best—better even than the "systems of oppression" lesson plan on capitalism and white supremacy—is the average class size of 20 students per room.

School director Kali Akuno-Williams says, "We're trying to engage them with education that's relevant to their direct lives." If the faculty really want to teach the students something relevant to their lives, how about a seminar in how to get the hell out of the Oakland Unified School District?♦

Year of the Ditz

It took Republicans about three weeks to rid themselves of Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott after he made his foolish and obnoxious comments about Strom Thurmond. For the most part, elected Republicans were initially tepid in their criticism of Lott and willing to excuse the stupidity of their colleague.

But consider the Democrats. At about the same time as the Lott brouhaha, Washington senator Patty Murray took to a local high school to praise Osama bin Laden. "Osama bin Laden has been very, very effective being—we've got to ask, why is this man so popular around the world? Why are people so supportive of him in many countries? He has been in many countries that are riddled with poverty.

"People don't have phones, no sewers, no roads, no schools, no health care, no facilities just to make sure their daily lives are OK. He's been out in these countries for decades building roads, building schools, building infrastructure, building day care facilities, building health care facilities, and the people are extremely grateful. It made their lives better. We have not done that. We haven't been out in many of these countries helping them build infrastructure.

"How would they look at us today if we had been there helping them with some of that rather than just being the people who are going to bomb in Iraq and go to Afghanistan?"

In their political stupidity and general offensiveness, Murray's comments are at least in the same league as Lott's. But comparisons aside, Murray claimed to be imparting facts, and on those she was dead wrong about nearly everything. To pick just one relevant example, look at her assertion that "we have not done that." Consider the U.S. troops in Afghanistan. Virtually everyone in-country today is engaged in some form of infrastructure-building. Indeed, many of them are doing exactly the kinds of things Murray found so laudable in Osama bin Laden. It's also worth noting that many of our troops are headquartered at an airport in Kandahar financed largely by the U.S. government in the 1950s, when Afghanistan was a major recipient—a showcase even—of U.S. development aid.

No matter. Her colleagues were silent. And while Lott was eventually contrite, Murray was not. In a clarification issued after her initial remarks, she allowed that bin Laden is "evil" but couldn't find any good words for the Americans doing good deeds abroad—

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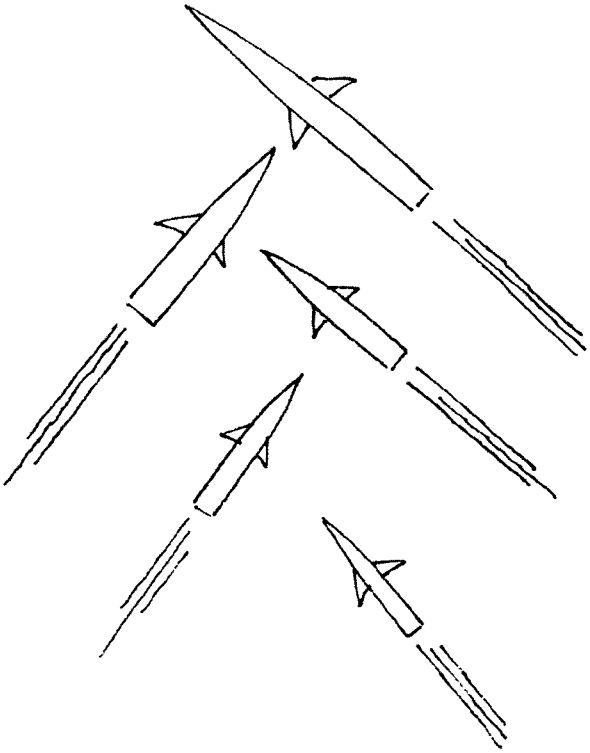

ANTI-ANTI-ANTI-ANTI-MISSILE DEFENSE

P. Steiner

many of whom are doing humanitarian work in parts of the world where they are daily threatened with murder by followers of bin Laden. Instead, she attacked those who criticized her. "Having a challenging and thoughtful discussion about America's future reflects the best values of a free democracy; to sensationalize and distort in an attempt to divide does not."

We'll leave it to SCRAPBOOK readers to decide who's sensationalizing and distorting. But we won't look to Patty Murray or her silent Democratic colleagues for a "thoughtful" discussion of terrorism. ♦

Murder and Other 'Human Failings'

In his article elsewhere in this issue, Max Boot notes, "Whenever the serious issues of the Middle East are raised, from oppression in Saudi Arabia to nuclear weapons development in Iran, the answer one hears from Europeans, Arabs, United Nations functionaries, all sorts of supposedly serious people, is invariably the same: The real issue is the Palestinians. Until we resolve their horrible plight, peace will never come to the Middle East."

The same refrain is sung, too, whenever there is an outbreak of terrorism in need of excusing. And it's nothing new. Last week, the *London Telegraph* published the recently declassified 1972 cable traffic among British diplomats following the massacre of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics by the PLO's Black September movement. It will surprise no one familiar with the prejudices of the Foreign Office to learn that it was quite blasé about the massacre; indeed, that it found a way to blame Israel for the murder of its athletes.

Here's the September 12, 1972, cable to London from Gayford Woodrow, British consul general in Jerusalem, less than a week after the terrorists had murdered 11 Israeli Olympians during a shootout at a NATO airbase outside Munich between the PLO terrorists and German police:

"Before we reproach the Arabs too much, perhaps we might try to put ourselves in their shoes. They are, after all, human beings with normal human failings. The Palestinians in particular have seen their land taken away from them by a group of mainly European invaders equipped with superior armed force and modern technology.

"Whatever one's moral criticism, it must be agreed that the Munich operation was well planned and that the Arabs there carried it out to the bitter end. It is said that lives were really lost because of Israel and West German bungling incompetence."

Ah, yes: Have to doff our hats to those expert Black September planners—real craftsmen. Woodrow's boss, James Craig, noted of this dispatch, "Not bad but he goes just a little too far"—which, mild as it is, is more disapprobation than either could summon up for the killers. ♦

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Casual

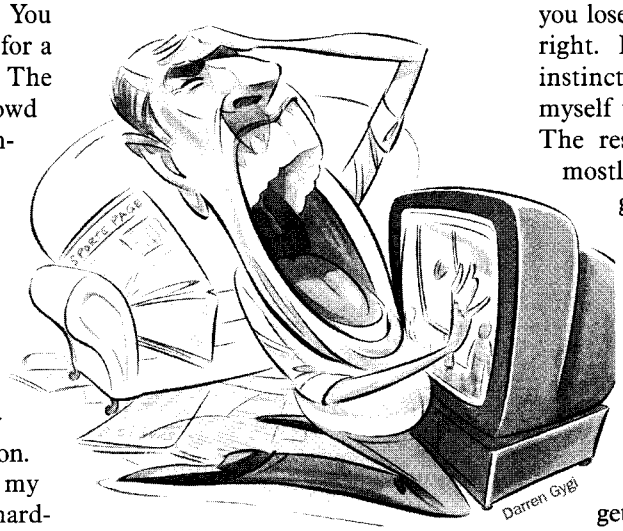
What Are the Odds?

Last week, my favorite ailing team, the Washington Redskins, finally defeated the Dallas Cowboys, their most hated rival in the NFC. Not that you can call it a rivalry—Dallas had beaten the Redskins ten times in a row over the last five years. But still there was much to celebrate. Retiring cornerback Darrell Green made a beautiful 35-yard punt return. Cowboys legend Emmitt Smith fell short of his twelfth consecutive 1,000-yard rushing season. You couldn't ask for a better ending for a team not making the playoffs. The players were ecstatic. The crowd went wild. And I sat there, watching the television, seething.

At last it had come to this. My love for the game had been perversely affected by a little thing called a football pool. Because of an occasional gambling itch, I'd entered into an online league where you and a bunch of other degenerates try to pick the weekly winners for the NFL regular season. I'd been coaxed into joining by my old college housemate Pete, a hardcore gambler himself. He's the kind of guy who would chew you out for splitting tens playing blackjack. If you were at a craps table and chose to bet with the House, he'd accuse you of going over to the Dark Side.

"You ought to go in, it's lots of fun," he told me. And because I so enjoyed getting wrapped up in college basketball and filling out brackets for March Madness, I couldn't resist. Naturally it was only after I committed to the pool (called "Sundayrage") that my friend told me he stayed out last year because it almost drove him insane. Now I was about to find out for myself.

One of the conditions associated with sports betting is the point spread. It's not enough that you pick a team to win—the team has to win by a certain margin (the spread) that is scientifically calculated by men who devote their entire lives to watching games. They're the bookies (also known as bookmakers and oddsmakers, to sound more professional). Innumerable factors can determine a spread, from who is on the injured list to which player has a drug problem to which coach is getting canned. And taking all this into consideration has led me to hope some teams would lose, but not by a lot. Or that some teams win by two touchdowns and not just a field goal. I am no longer just enjoying a game and wishing the best team wins. Staring at the score updates is now as compelling as the game itself.



With sports betting, you exponentially increase your awareness of the goings-on throughout the NFL. For instance, you watch all the pregame shows, post-game shows, and *Inside the NFL*. You learn about Detroit Lions quarterback Joey Harrington's having had a catheter ablation to treat an abnormal heartbeat. And the Giants' Michael Strahan speculating that Warren Sapp is getting so fat he must be living next to McDonald's.

But worst of all is the second-guessing. From the very opening of the season I racked my brain over how many points a team could score. Could the 49ers beat the Giants by at least 4 points? (No. They beat them by 3.) Could the Eagles crush the Houston Texans by more than 20 points? (No again. They beat them by *only* 18.) Is Champaign, Illinois, really home-field advantage for the Chicago Bears? After a couple of weeks, my overthinking landed me next to last place in the pool. This is when I had the epiphany.

There's a sucker prize for last place, and I now found myself within reach of that. But I would have to switch strategies and pick losers instead of winners. So in the fifteenth week of the season, I decided to choose the exact opposite of whoever I thought would win. The problem is, there is something inherently wrong with hoping you lose, wishing not to get anything right. It goes against your every instinct. Nevertheless, I committed myself to this new way of thinking. The result? My wrong picks were mostly right: I got 11 out of 16 games correct, winning the week.

But where to from here? I could no longer tell which were my genuine picks and which the opposite: Did I really think the Saints could beat the Bengals by 8? (The Bengals upset the Saints instead.) And why couldn't I get myself to pick Seattle or Carolina to win anything? By the final week, like my buddy Pete, I had been driven insane. I no longer trusted those bookmakers with their mystical odds. Surely I could predict better than they could.

Which brings me back to my seething at the Redskins. Indeed, it was great we broke the 10-game losing streak. And yes, it was touching to see Darrell Green bid a tearful farewell to the fans. But the Skins, who I picked to win, had to beat the Cowboys by at least 7 points. The final score: Redskins over Cowboys, 20-14.

Pete tells me he's had it and that he won't play next year. I'll probably join him. Unless, of course, I get that itch again.

Victorino Matus

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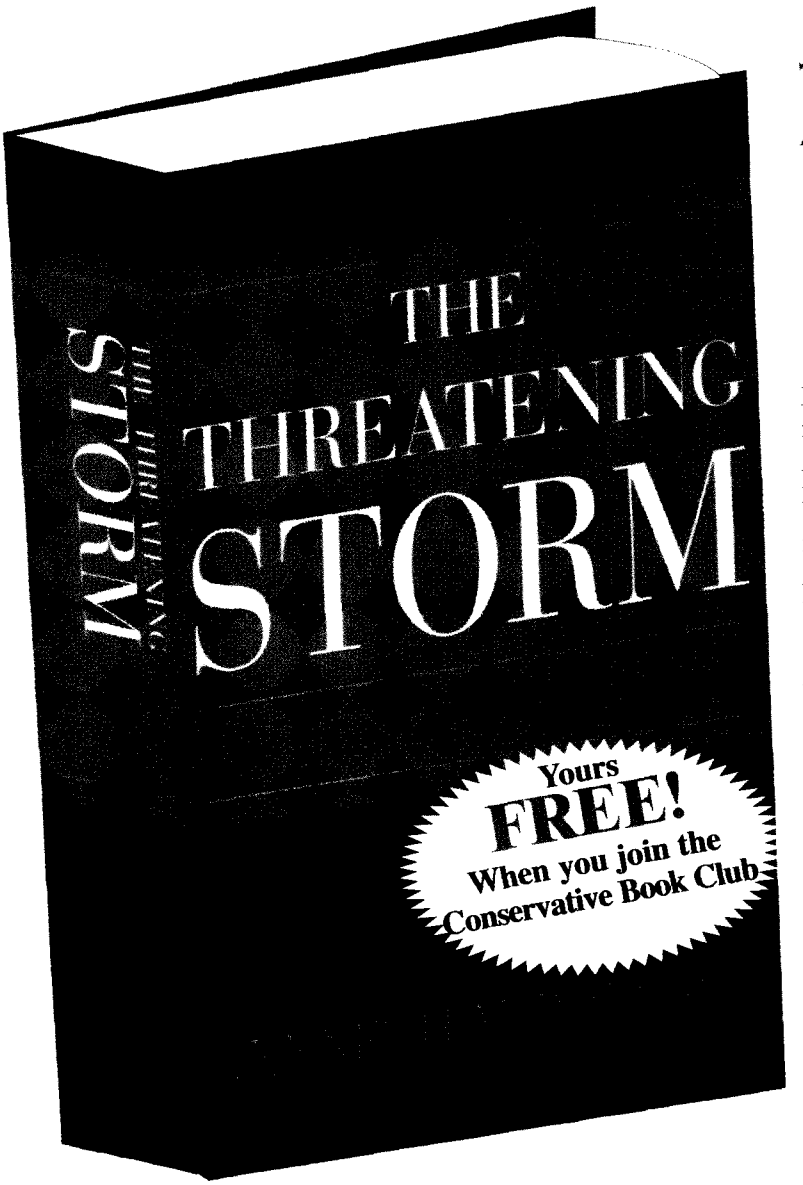
WHY WE MUST INVADE IRAQ



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Making it with Brooks

What an intriguing piece by David Brooks ("Making It," Dec. 23). If what he writes is true, college hasn't changed since I went to Lake Forest College (1975-1979). His description of how the kids regard lefty professors strikes me as particularly on the mark.

Brooks's report is rather reassuring, with one notable caveat. He says that at Yale (and lots of schools like it, I bet) the most important thing to so many kids is all the activities available to them. At Lake Forest, I was editor of the student paper, played varsity soccer, was on the executive committee of student government, and partied my brains out. But the most important thing I did in college was read—the books assigned to me and all the others. Someone (I nominate Brooks) needs to tell these kids that they'll never really catch up with what they miss out on reading in college.

Jim McGrath
Albany, NY

As a recent graduate of Kenyon College and a current graduate student at Yale, I very much enjoyed reading "Making It." I found it a sharp and accurate summary of many of my experiences on the receiving end of higher education.

Nonetheless, I take mild exception to Brooks's statements on the "tyranny of the grade point average." While I would agree that generalism is rewarded in college admissions, I have the pleasure of acquaintance with many intelligent current and former students who are bright enough to be successful in all subject areas, but who still managed, even in high school, to follow their interests devotedly. I concede that this is a rare exception in the rules of the college-admissions race.

His opinions on the requirement for mindless deference to teachers, and even, I would argue, to professors, seem to me precisely on target. At Kenyon, this was the main source of disaffection among the top students: By the time of graduation, seniors had spent far too much time feeding professors the opinions they wanted to hear.

When Brooks claims, "Most of all, I met students who had never really thought about how they wanted to spend their lives," this struck a deep chord with me. My liberal arts education has in no way prepared me for deciding on any kind of career or vocation. If he ever produces the career magazine he describes in the article, I will subscribe.

Janice E. Pour
New Haven, CT

If David Brooks were to visit The Catholic University of America, the ostensibly conservative university where I am currently a senior, he would encounter attitudes about sex and relationships similar to those he describes at "elite schools." Kids here are liberal about drinking and extremely liberal about what most adults would call casual sex. Many of these kids were deeply religious before they came to CUA, but their arrival, even at a place which should foster their Catholicism, prompted a radical, if not directly conscious, reconsideration of their basic value systems.

But every Tuesday night, a group of priests gets together in our campus bar to engage in "Theology on Tap." All students are invited to discuss various notions of God and religion over beer, and it is typical for CUA students to come to these sessions to initiate friendly arguments with these men in black.

The article is good because it is true. More than true, it is precise. Brooks should, however, check out the little people—he might find not only validation, but an interesting change of pace from the elitism of those beautiful campuses of the rich.

Mathew Dunn
Washington, DC

Cloning Conundrum

The editorial by William Kristol and Eric Cohen "A Clone by any Other Name" (Dec. 23) perpetuates the confusion between cloning and the destruction of human embryos for medical research purposes. Stanford University's announcement that it will produce cloned human embryos for biomedical research is morally objectionable because such embryos are not, in principle, distinguishable from any other human beings. However, the editorial closes by approvingly quoting President Bush's reference to "human beings being created in test tubes."

There is an enormous difference between reproductive cloning, which by definition involves an intention to treat the being created as a human being, and "therapeutic" cloning, which is a euphemism for creating an embryo for the purpose of destroying it in order to extract its stem cells. Any moral objections to the first must stand on a different footing than objections to the second. Failing to insist on that differentiation sows confusion.

Irving Berger
Tucson, AZ

Student Loan Trouble

Allan Carlson ("The Anti-Dowry," Dec. 16) accurately identifies an increasingly daunting challenge that faces the nation and individual families: how to ensure that young Americans can gain access to college education without assuming crushing student loan debt. This question is especially pressing for America's low- and moderate-income families, because the financial responsibility for a son or daughter's college education lies with the family; governments and institutions provide student aid primarily to those who cannot afford to pay. Indeed, the problem is even more profound than Carlson suggests. Inadequate student aid, as well as skyrocketing debt, will keep as many as 2 million college-qualified low- and moderate-income high school graduates out of college entirely in this decade (see "Empty Promises," *http://www.ed.gov/offices/AC/ACSFA/emptypromises.pdf*).

Before blaming this unfortunate circumstance entirely on the federal government's student aid policies and calling for government intervention resulting from the government's "compelling interest in debt relief," one should examine the problem in a bit more depth. Over half of the current student loan volume is non-need loans, suggesting that a large proportion of families who can afford to pay for their children's education are accessing student loans as a matter of convenience, rather than need. Since the article focuses on the broad impact of loan debt on the family, one could legitimately

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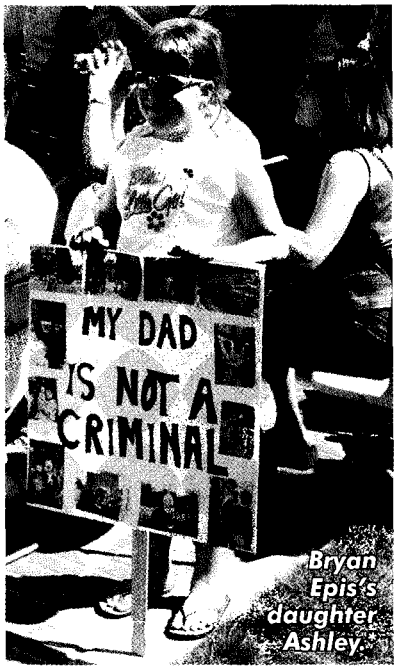
Will You Help Ashley and Her Dad?

Federal prosecutors won't permit court testimony concerning why marijuana was used, even though marijuana is permitted as medicine under the laws of California and eight other states.

And because juries have no way of knowing otherwise, Federal prosecutors accuse patients and good Samaritans of being "Drug King Pins."



Bryan Epis's daughter Ashley.*

How can judges and jurors dispense "justice and mercy" without relevant information?

According to a TIME / CNN poll, 80% of Americans approve of medical marijuana.

Please urge Attorney General Ashcroft to permit the presentation of all of the evidence. And ask your congressman and senators to pass a law preventing future concealment.

Will You Act?

* Bryan Epis was sentenced to ten years. The story the jury did not hear: In 1983, while in high school, Bryan was a passenger in a car that hit a telephone pole. The car decelerated from 35 mph to 0 in 20 milliseconds. Bryan had lacerations all over his body, 15 inches of lacerations in his skull, his sternum was fractured and two ribs were broken. The T2 and T3 vertebrae suffered compression fractures. The surgery just to stitch his head together lasted 2½ hours. He was in a coma for two days, and intensive care for three days. The surgeon said he was lucky not to be a vegetable or dead. Bryan began two years of physical therapy. He was told that the compression fractures would never heal, and they haven't. He suffers from chronic pain. He was prescribed heavy narcotic and narcotic derivative drugs, codeine and Vicodin for the pain. In 1983, his orthopedic surgeon recommended marijuana as a drug that could relieve pain better than the narcotics. Bryan used cannabis from 1983 to 1997. Using marijuana in combination with exercise, he reduced the pain level from level 10 to level 1. While using cannabis in his treatment, he finished high school; finished the grueling program for a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from California State University at Chico in May 1991 (only 1 in 5 who enter the program graduate); and finished law school at California Northern School of Law in May 1998. Bryan's explanation for growing the marijuana was that he needed it to alleviate his pain and to help other seriously ill patients.

Kevin B. Zeese, President, Common Sense for Drug Policy
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question the wisdom of a policy that rewards the children of relatively affluent families that have not made the effort required to pay for their children's education but, rather, as a matter of convenience, required their children to assume educational debt. Is it really wise to use increasingly scarce government resources to reward these families when the needs of those who genuinely cannot afford to pay for their children's education are so great?

BRIAN FITZGERALD
Silver Spring, MD

ALLAN CARLSON PRESENTS a reasoned and alarming argument against student loan programs in "The Anti-Dowry," but unfortunately applies his own special interest mindset to the solution.

Proposals like Carlson's for the student loan program are precisely why the "law of unintended consequences" is so evident in government attempts to improve people's lives. The government finds a problem that it wants to address. It decides to make college education available to everyone who wants it: a noble and reasonable goal, with obvious benefits to society. But when the government involves itself in the workings of a market, the prices go up, and generally quality goes down.

The government, because it is spending "other people's money," has no incentive to demand value commensurate with price, and the economic principle of "whatever the market will bear" is perverted to the point where the system perpetuates itself by continually expanding. The people come to expect their entitlements, and the entire market begins to function in the model that comes from the government's intrusion. In a very short time, it is impossible to go back.

No other entity that lends money would continue to operate with a "stubbornly high" default rate of 11 to 12 percent, but the government, which has no profit motive and no serious concerns about its financial health being intrinsic to its survival, finds it perfectly acceptable.

Carlson finds it so acceptable that his "solution" actually contains new methodology for defaulting. Student loans too much for you to repay? Just pop out a few kids and have them erased. This is bound to produce more college-educated, career-oriented parents that have no time for family life while they work to pay the taxes that provide free "loans" for future generations.

While I can certainly understand, and even applaud, society's compelling interest in families that already exist, Carlson loses me when he begins to include concepts like "human capital" in his analysis. The species will perpetuate itself, with or without any government, because this is the most basic human drive.

I am more concerned with quality than quantity when it comes to "human capital," and though government might influence the quantity of children born, plans like Carlson's can only reduce their quality of life.

LINDA L. VAUGHN
Gilbert, AZ

TROTSKY IN HOLLYWOOD

I ENJOYED STEPHEN SCHWARTZ'S review of the movie *Frida* ("Trotsky Lives!" Dec. 16) and his digression into Leon Trotsky and Trotskyism. I would simply point out that the image of Trotsky as portrayed in the film and some quarters of academe represents the almost complete internalization of the portrait of Trotsky as presented in Isaac Deutscher's three-volume biography, *The Prophet Armed*, *The Prophet Unarmed*, and *The Prophet Outcast*. Deutscher's Trotsky is portrayed as a sort of genteel alternative to Stalin. (Deutscher also wrote a semi-favorable biography of Stalin, and the greatest fault he saw in Stalin was his meanness toward Trotsky.)

The hazy nostalgia for the image of Trotsky overlooks what Trotsky was in real life: a dedicated professional revolutionary who was every bit as bloodthirsty as his contemporaries. Trotsky's own works often reek with glib references to terror and its uses. That he died at the hands of Stalin's assassin (immortalized in another truly awful movie with Richard Burton as Trotsky) should not obscure Trotsky's own role in the creation of the totalitarian state that ultimately destroyed him. Trotsky reaped what he sowed.

RICHARD DINARDO
Stafford, VA

AFTER-CHRISTMAS SALE

WANTING MY KIDS TO LEARN the catchy Bible-based songs that I sang as a child, I recently shopped at Stephen Bates's "Jesus Market" (Dec. 16) and bought a cassette tape entitled *Bible Action Songs*. The tape began well with old favorites like "Deep and Wide" and "Only a Boy Named David," but when I flipped it over, I found myself having to teach my two-year-old "Heaven's Hokey Pokey" (*You do the hokey-pokey and you turn yourself around / Happy we're heaven bound*).

This paled in comparison with the penultimate song, "J-E-S-U-S," which begins: *There is a name I love to hear / And Jesus is his name-o.* My daughter kept asking me what happened to Bingo.

KATHLEEN PREVOST
Monroe, NC

OUR BIGGEST FAN

READING ALGIS VALIUNAS'S smarmy, ignorant, and self-righteous article on that incendiary piece of archetypal liberal tripe [*Uncle Tom's Cabin*] reminded me why I cancelled my subscription to your snotty Yankee journal ("The Great American Novel?" Dec. 16).

WAYNE AUSTERMAN
Converse, TX

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the weekly Standard

A Tax Cut, Not a Whimper

Somebody tell the Bush White House that Republicans now control the Senate. And while you're at it, remind the president's men and women of three other things. One, President Bush has only one shot—now—at stimulating the economy. Anything done next year will be too late to affect economic conditions before the 2004 election. Two, it takes only 50 senators, plus Vice President Cheney, to pass a tax cut by using the reconciliation process. Three, there's a potent new force in American politics: President Bush. In 2001, he emerged as a decisive commander in chief. Last year, he became a political powerhouse, able to influence the outcome of congressional elections and a lot more, including tax legislation. For good reason, many Democrats are terrified of crossing Bush.

Given all this, it's astonishing the White House is so goosey about championing a growth-oriented tax cut that would all but guarantee a robust economy next year, when Bush will be seeking reelection. In the days before the January 7 unveiling of Bush's tax proposal, a major White House concern was neutralizing charges the plan would unduly favor the rich. President Bush himself got in the act, telling reporters he's "concerned about all the people." His focus, Bush said, is "how best to help those folks who are looking for work." This is a fine sentiment, but it suggests a far narrower agenda than the mandate Bush and congressional Republicans won in the November 5 election. And it's that mandate—for tax cuts to stir an economic resurgence helping everyone, not just the unemployed—that the president's plan must be measured against.

The question is whether Bush is seeking everything in a stimulus package that's economically necessary and politically achievable. It's true the economy is growing slightly and the stock market is no longer cratering. But there are real problems—a sinking dollar, rising oil prices, persistently lagging consumer confidence, to name just three—plus the lingering possibility of a renewed recession. Bush's initial tax cut got us out of the 2001 recession, but it wasn't sufficient to sustain strong economic growth. After all, only about 30 percent of it has gone into effect. Much more is needed—a real stimulus—and quickly.

Somehow the idea got planted at the White House that a watered-down tax cut, less susceptible to Democratic attacks, would be better politically for the president. Nothing could be further from the truth. The politics here are quite simple: The economy itself is the only political factor that matters, not the packaging, not the distributional tables, not the size of the majority that votes for the tax cut. Rather than avoidance of Democratic criticism now, Bush's goal must be a booming economy a year from now. If the economy is growing at a crisp pace in 2004, Bush will bask in the glow of good times and win reelection easily. If it isn't, he'll be blamed and reelection will be difficult. Whatever hedges the president is seeking in his tax proposal—not cutting the individual income tax rate for the top bracket (38.6 percent), for instance—won't aid him politically if the economy is tanking in 2004.

Hedges are unnecessary. Bush has the political clout to get practically everything he asks for. Sure, he can make concessions to Democrats to get their support for his tax proposal. But why do it? Should the economy remain weak next year, does anyone think Democrats will say, well, don't heap all the blame on Bush because we're in this with him and it's our fault too? Not a chance. If he refrains from moving the cut in the top income tax rate forward from 2004 to 2003, is it conceivable that Democrats will cease their attacks on Bush as protector of the wealthy? No way. Since he won't be spared attacks anyway, the president has every reason to seek the maximum economic stimulus.

The president took the first step to improving the economy when he recognized, months ago, that something must be done. He fired his Treasury secretary, Paul O'Neill, who disagreed on that fundamental point. And the Bush team understands the source of the economic trouble. Consumption has held up remarkably well, but investment hasn't. There's been a significant reduction in business investment, a precipitous drop in venture capital spending, and a whopping decline in wealth from the fall in stock prices. In drawing up the outlines of a new tax cut, the White House quickly embraced a number of smart ways to stir investment. One is accelerating the phased-in income tax rate reductions of Bush's 2001 tax cut. The lower the

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rate, the greater the impact on investment. The higher the rate, the less capital unleashed for investment. And of course it's a lower top rate that's most important because higher earners are the most likely to invest their windfall.

Bush is rightly enamored of ending the double taxation of stock dividends, long a pet project of R. Glenn Hubbard, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. The wisest course with the most economic clout would be to let businesses deduct the cost of dividends. Still, it's understandable in political terms why Bush would want to end taxation of dividends for individuals. This should enhance investment a bit and restore a modicum of tax fairness.

At the White House, the dividend issue provoked an internal debate over increasing the budget deficit. The idea of limiting the tax cut to 50 percent of the value of dividends was discussed (and leaked to the press). But the anxiety about the deficit was misplaced. Yes, going halfway in eliminating the taxation of dividends would lead to a smaller deficit the first year, but so what? There's no political or economic reason to be spooked by a deficit of $200 billion or so in an economy of nearly $11 trillion. No candidate for any office has ever lost because the deficit was too big. And the evidence of the past two decades is that deficits don't drive up interest rates and thus adversely affect the economy. For Bush, what's paramount is the economy in 2004. No one will pay a moment's notice to the deficit if the economy is strong. And no one will pay attention to the deficit if it's weak, either, because the deficit will be dwarfed as an issue by the bad economy.

There are other sensible steps Bush should take, some of which he's taking, some he's not. For example, all tax cuts should be made effective January 1, 2003. That would please financial markets and trigger a stock market rally. Expanding the speeded-up depreciation in the tiny 2002 stimulus package would promote investment. Slicing the capital gains tax rate in half for all new (after January 1, 2003) investments would spur both investment and business formation. This may be a bridge too far for the White House, however, since it would further skew the impact of tax cuts in favor of the rich.

The good news is there's a way around the distributional problem, one recommended by Democrats such as Senators Mary Landrieu and John Kerry and by Republican supply-siders. The solution is to cut the payroll tax for every worker. Dropping the payroll tax rate by one or two percentage points would ease the biggest tax burden most Americans face and cut the cost of hiring new workers. A study by the Institute for Research on the Economics of Taxation found a one percentage point reduction would create 500,000 new jobs. And it wouldn't jeopardize Social Security because surplus cash in the trust fund is already being siphoned off to pay for government programs.

The saying around Washington these days is that if Bush wants something badly enough, he can get it. In the case of tax cuts, he can wind up with *more* than he asks for. In 1981, President Reagan did. Then, the White House was wary of indexing the tax code for inflation. But indexation was introduced on the Senate floor and approved, then endorsed by Reagan. It stayed in the tax bill. At the time, Republicans controlled the Senate but not the House. Now they control both houses of Congress, making them all the more capable of strengthening Bush's tax proposal. Democrats may scream, but 19 Democratic senators are up for reelection in 2004, and 7 or 8 of them are vulnerable, thus unlikely to oppose tax cuts. So the stage is set for a Bush triumph on taxes. The only question is whether he'll get everything he can or needlessly settle for less.

—Fred Barnes, for the Editors

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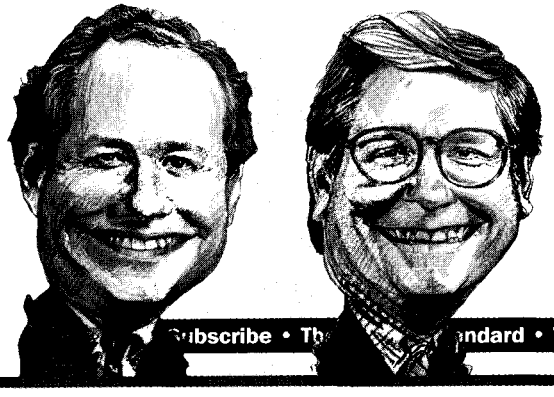

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Exploiting the Palestinians

Everyone's doing it.

BY MAX BOOT

IN AN INTERVIEW LAST MONTH with Britain's *Sunday Times*, Yasser Arafat rebuked Osama bin Laden for seeking to exploit the Palestinians' cause for his own ends. "Why is bin Laden talking about Palestine now? . . . He never helped us. He was working in another, completely different area and against our interests," Arafat was quoted as saying. "I'm telling him directly not to hide behind the Palestinian cause."

Good advice, but it's doubtful bin Laden will take it. Just about everyone else exploits the Palestinian cause —Arafat first and foremost, but also, according to the latest reports, some of his Israeli "peace partners"—so why shouldn't old fur face?

Whenever the serious issues of the Middle East are raised, from oppression in Saudi Arabia to nuclear weapons development in Iran, the answer one hears from Europeans, Arabs, United Nations functionaries, all sorts of supposedly serious people, is invariably the same: The real issue is the Palestinians. Until we resolve their horrible plight, peace will never come to the Middle East. This is an absurd argument since even if Israel ceased to exist tomorrow, this would not affect in the slightest the tensions between Islamic fundamentalists and secularists, between rich Gulf kingdoms and their poor cousins, between Shiites and Sunnis, between democrats and dictators, or the countless other San Andreas-sized fault lines that run through the Dar al-Islam (House of Islam). It is helpful to remember that all of the dead in the Arab-Israeli wars of the past half century amount to only a tiny fraction of the million killed during the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s, the 100,000 killed in Algeria's civil war since 1992, or the 100,000 killed in Lebanon's civil war from 1975 to 1990.

Surely anyone with a modicum of knowledge about the Middle East knows that the plight of the Palestinians isn't "the" issue. So why do so many people insist that it is? Let us count the reasons.

For the Europeans, championing the Palestinian cause allows them to assuage lingering colonial guilt by championing the aspirations of a Third World people who claim to be oppressed by Western imperialists—in this case, Israelis. It also allows Europeans to trumpet their moral superiority over pro-Israel Americans. And, last but not least, it allows them to curry favor with both oil-rich Arab states and their own growing Muslim minorities. Europeans hope that Arabs will show their gratitude by doing business with them and not targeting them for terrorism. All of this comes at a price, though: The E.U. is one of the Palestinian Authority's main non-Arab bankrollers, to the tune of $10 million a month.

For Middle Eastern states, championing the Palestinian cause is even more vital because doing so provides an important pillar of legitimacy for their manifestly illegitimate governments. Naturally the Arab states' interest is in preserving "the struggle," not in succoring the Palestinian people who (along with the Israelis) are its chief victims. There are almost 4 million Palestinians and most live in conditions of unrelieved squalor; large swaths of the West Bank and Gaza Strip make the South Bronx look like Club Med by comparison. The only Arab state that has granted citizenship to Palestinians is Jordan; the others prefer to keep them as an unassimilated, militant minority.

More than 1.1 million Palestinians are jammed into 59 refugee camps whose support comes mainly from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency and other international bodies. As former U.S. ambassador to Morocco Marc Ginsberg points out, all the Arab states combined donate less than $7 million to UNRWA, just 2.4 percent of its $290 million budget. (Kuwait, Egypt, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Iraq, and the United Arab Emirates collectively contribute a grand total of zero.) By contrast, the Great Satan forks over $110 million, or 38 percent of UNRWA's budget. The Arabs prefer to spend their money to support Palestinian suicide bombers. Saddam Hussein alone has paid an estimated $20 million over the past two years to "martyrs'" families. The Saudis held a telethon to raise millions more. The Arab League as a whole contributes $55 million a month to Arafat's tyrannical Palestinian Authority, which keeps the suicide bombings coming.

Many Palestinians are privately appalled at these "martyrdom operations," which are killing their youth, destroying their economy, and empowering their religious fanatics. But Arab states are delighted. What are a few dead Palestinian teenagers in return for hurting Israel and its backers in America?

Much the same calculus seems to govern Yasser Arafat's thinking. He is, you might say, the chief exploiter of the Palestinians, followed closely by his senior goons. They reap the adulation of useful idiots abroad who celebrate them as "freedom fighters," but senior PA officials aren't the ones strapping dynamite to their chests and blowing up Israeli buses. Arafat's wife Suha has generously said that there would be "no greater honor" than to sacrifice her son as a martyr. But she doesn't have a son. She has a daughter and they live in Paris. Even

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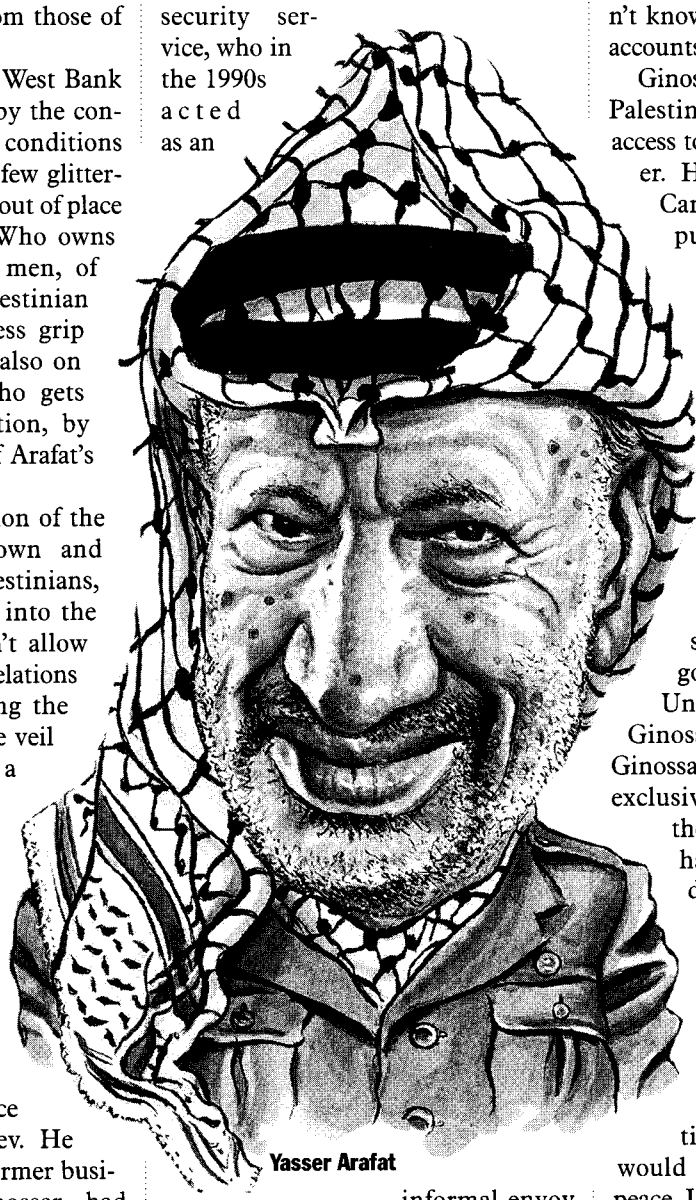
though some suicide bombings have been conducted by teenage girls, it's doubtful that seven-year-old Zahawa Arafat will be blowing up an El Al office on the way to her *école*. Her life, and her mother's, are far removed, literally and figuratively, from those of ordinary Palestinians.

Anyone who visits the West Bank and Gaza Strip is struck by the contrast between the general conditions of abysmal poverty and a few glittering villas that wouldn't be out of place on the French Riviera. Who owns these palazzos? Arafat's men, of course. Since the Palestinian Authority keeps a ruthless grip not only on politics but also on the economy, anyone who gets rich within PA jurisdiction, by definition, must be one of Arafat's apparatchiks.

The pervasive corruption of the PA has long been known and resented by ordinary Palestinians, but it seldom comes out into the open, since Arafat doesn't allow freedom of the press. Revelations in the Israeli press during the past month have lifted the veil of secrecy a bit, revealing a circle of exploitation that includes not only Arafat but also some of his Israeli negotiating partners.

On December 2, the Tel Aviv daily newspaper *Ma'ariv* printed a fascinating interview with a businessman and former military intelligence officer named Ozrad Lev. He claimed that he and his former business partner, Yossi Ginossar, had undertaken extensive and lucrative dealings with Muhammad Rashid, Arafat's chief financial adviser. In return for fat management fees, they set up Swiss bank accounts into which Rashid transferred more than $300 million of PA money, with Arafat's apparent authorization. Lev said he decided to go public after $65 million mysteriously disappeared. "This money could have been used for personal needs, to form a shelter [to hide the money] for Arafat and senior Palestinian officials, to pay salaries, or even, and I really hope not, for illegal activities," said Lev.

Who is Yossi Ginossar? A former agent of Shin Bet, Israel's internal security service, who in the 1990s acted as an informal envoy to the Palestinians on behalf of prime ministers Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres, and Ehud Barak. Ginossar is a leading "dove" who sits on the executive board of the Peres Center for Peace, the think tank that is to the Israeli left approximately what the Heritage Foundation is to the American right. He also hobnobs with the American think tanker Stephen P. Cohen, another incorrigible peace advocate (the website of his employer, the Israel Policy Forum, recently featured a report claiming "Oslo didn't fail"), who, *Ma'ariv* reports, profited from the Ginossar-Rashid business deals. (Cohen told me he was involved in some deals with Ginossar, but doesn't know anything about Swiss bank accounts.)



Yasser Arafat

Drew Friedman

Ginossar's position as envoy to the Palestinians allowed him privileged access to the highest councils of power. He participated in the 2000 Camp David talks, where he pushed Barak to make greater concessions. And, according to the *Jerusalem Post*, when the Gaza Strip was declared a military zone and closed to Israeli travelers, Ginossar was chauffeured to Arafat's office in Shin Bet armored cars.

Israel's attorney general, Elyakim Rubinstein, is now investigating this case, which has become a huge scandal in Israel, though it's gone largely unnoticed in the United States. Both Rashid and Ginossar deny any wrongdoing. Ginossar told *Ma'ariv*, "I was guided exclusively by boundless loyalty to the [Israeli] state," a claim that has been met with snorts of derision in Israel's rambunctious press. But there is perhaps an element of truth in what he says.

The Israeli governments of the 1990s wanted to encourage closer economic cooperation with the Palestinians in the hope that this would give their enemies a stake in peace. Unfortunately, instead of creating small businesses that could be the building blocks of Palestinian civil society, what developed was the kind of crony capitalism that is endemic to places like Russia. Arafat's confidants—not only Rashid but Muhammad Dahlan, Jibril Rajoub, Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), and others—were the big beneficiaries. Along, it now seems, with some select Israeli friends.

The Palestinian people and the

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cause of long-term peace were of course not helped by any of it. Instead these "business" dealings helped foster a gangster state more interested in war-making than economic development. It is striking that at the same time that news of Rashid's $300 million slush fund leaked out, the PA claimed it had no money to pay 100,000 civil servants. But the PA's transgressions, no matter how glaring, have long been overlooked by professional doves like Ginossar. Indeed, Lev says that he and Ginossar continued managing the $300 million fund for the Palestinians until at least August 2001—almost a year after the Al Aksa Intifada had begun.

So to the list of those exploiting the Palestinian cause add leading "peace" advocates. The good news is that the people of the Middle East are increasingly hip to this tiresome con game.

The Iranian government has recently tried to deflect the student demonstrations over the death sentence handed down to a history professor who dared to suggest that Muslims not "blindly follow religious leaders." Instead of protesting Seyyed Hashem Aghajari's fate, President Mohammad Khatami urged students to demonstrate for International Qods Day, a holiday invented by the late Ayatollah Khomeini to protest Israel's supposedly unlawful occupation of Qods (Jerusalem). The Student Movement Coordination Committee for Democracy in Iran threw this demand back into Khatami's face. In a statement translated by the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), the students said, "Observing the 'Day of Qods' in support of violence is a lunacy that is neither advantageous to the Palestinian nation nor does it coincide with the national interests of the people of Iran."

Pretty smart, those Iranian students. They aren't fooled by pro-Palestinian rhetoric. But there is at least one group left that takes seriously the protestations that no progress can be made in the Middle East until the Palestinian issue is settled. You can find them in Foggy Bottom. ♦

Who Is Robert Bartley?

The most influential journalist of our time.

BY ROBERT D. NOVAK

WHILE COVERING platform and rules committee hearings in Detroit during the week preceding the 1980 Republican national convention, I put together an informal dinner party of about a dozen politicians and journalists. Clarke Reed, the longtime Mississippi Republican leader, was excited. Bob Bartley would be at the dinner, and Reed wanted to be seated next to him. "He's my hero," said Reed, a senior member of the Republican National Committee and a national mover and shaker in the GOP for the previous two decades. Robert L. Bartley was only 42 years old but had been the *Wall Street Journal*'s editor (actually, editor of the editorial pages) for eight years already and was to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1980. By then, he had become an authoritative figure for Reed and other conservative activists.

The summer of 1980 was a time of high excitement for these activists. Not only was the Republican convention prepared to nominate Ronald Reagan, but it also was drafting a robust conservative platform calling for a militant foreign policy, tax cuts, and limitations on abortion. The dinner table conversation that night in a Detroit restaurant was intense and heated, with everybody participating—except Bartley. He was silent, and Clarke Reed was disappointed.

Bob Bartley was then what he was on December 31, when he retired as the *Journal*'s editor after 30 years: a shy, soft-spoken Midwesterner whose voice is usually the softest in any crowd. "I'm not a very flashy guy," he has said. Not a familiar face on the television talk show circuit, he has let his keyboard do his talking—in a very loud voice indeed.

John Tebbel, professor emeritus of journalism at New York University, called Bartley "the most influential editorial writer of my time." That was in 1982, when Bartley had been in charge for 10 years. In the 20 years since then, he arguably established himself as the most influential editorial writer of any time.

Newspaper reporters always have held a low opinion of editorial writers, typified by a vulgar joke that I first heard about 50 years ago: Why is writing an editorial like urinating in a blue serge suit? Because it gives you a warm feeling and nobody knows what you've done. That clearly is not true of Bartley, for two very good reasons.

The first reason was set forth by Bartley's weekly column in the *Journal* December 30, marking the end of his tenure as editor (but not, thankfully, as a columnist): "Journalistically, my proudest boast is that I've run the only editorial page in the country that actually sells newspapers." Indeed, people who are uninterested in markets or even business read the *Wall Street Journal* because of the pages under Bartley's domain. For years I have noticed *Journal* readers on morning airline flights turn first to the editorial page.

The second and more important reason is his enormous impact on public policy. Without Bartley and his newspaper, supply-side economics would have been stillborn. His muscular foreign policy sounded the

Robert D. Novak is a syndicated columnist and CNN commentator.

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death knell of isolationism on the right. His relentless assaults on Bill Clinton's ethics set the standard for Republicans. He has not permitted conservatives to forget such unpleasant issues as tort reform and school choice.

That has not made Bartley a popular figure with journalism's predominant left wing. Michael Kinsley, once a liberal columnist for Bartley, has accused him of "Stalinist tendencies" and called him a "central cog in the vast right-wing conspiracy" as well as "irresponsible and intellectually dishonest."

While editorial page editors normally comprise a band of brothers who never criticize each other, whatever prominent colleagues say about Bartley is invariably negative. John Oakes, the former editorial page editor of the *New York Times*, talked about "Bartley's hallucinatory ideas of the facts." Anthony Day, who ran the *Los Angeles Times* editorial page, called Bartley's page "humorless, zealous and doctrinaire" (the second two indictments, but certainly not the first, bearing some validity).

Remarkably, staffers on the news side of the *Journal*, who have no connection with Bartley and his staff in the newspaper's "church and state" division, have spoken critically of Bartley on the record. In 1982, veteran political reporter James Perry said Bartley engaged in "name-calling." Alan Murray, when he was the *Journal*'s deputy bureau chief in Washington, said a state of "enmity" existed between Bartley and the rest of the paper.

Actually, the *Journal*'s editorial page was winning awards when the *Journal* was a relatively low-circulation newspaper still concentrating on accurate market and corporate reporting. Two of Bartley's predecessors, William Grimes and Vermont Royster, won the *Journal*'s first two Pulitzers. Vermont Connecticut Royster, a North Carolinian who as a young reserve officer commanded a U.S. Navy destroyer in World War II, was a journalistic stylist, producing a literate, slightly old-fashioned editorial page that was true to the Jeffersonian tradition, from limited government to free trade. When I was a reporter for the *Journal* nearly 40 years ago, my liberal colleagues in the Washington bureau joked about "Roy" as an old fogey conservative, but they would never have dreamed of saying so publicly. Nor would his colleagues on other newspapers.

Always on the alert for new talent, Royster spotted Bartley as a young reporter in the *Journal*'s Chicago bureau (where he was hired in 1962 at age 24). Growing up in Minnesota and Iowa as the son of a professor of veterinary medicine, Bartley studied journalism at Iowa State University and edited the school newspaper. He was no conservative then. Indeed, when Royster asked him to come to New York in 1964 to work on the editorial page, Bartley at first resisted on grounds that he wasn't conservative enough. After all, he voted for Lyndon B. Johnson against Barry Goldwater.

Building a staff that approached 50 people, he in effect established a parallel universe performing its own independent reporting.

By the time that Royster dispatched Bartley to Washington in 1971 for a taste of life in the capital, he found no difficulty in writing conservative editorials. It was unpleasant for everybody. The bureau's liberal reporters called Bartley a right-wing "kook," and it was made clear to him that he was not a bona fide member of the bureau. It was hardly unreasonable that Bartley, naturally shy, reacted to such treatment by becoming a loner. When Royster's successor suddenly and unexpectedly died in 1972, Bartley was given the title of editor (who traditionally supervised only the editorial page) at age 34. I was the only "conservative" in the Washington bureau in 1958-63 (and really not all that conservative), but nobody talked of a "church and state" division in those days. Indeed, I wrote for the editorial page more than I did for page one, and liberal reporters occasionally contributed.

Such practices ended under Bartley. Indicating doubt that the big and growing Washington bureau could supply the information he needed, he did something no other edit page editor in the country has attempted before or since. Building a staff that approached 50 people, he in effect established a parallel universe performing its own reporting—a newsgathering operation operating independently of the rest of the newspaper. Bartley was breaking news in his editorials.

The Washington bureau did not like that much, and it resulted in a shouting match over dinner at Washington's Madison hotel between the bureau and Bartley. He made clear that he felt no compunction to reflect a diversity of views on the edit page. As early as 1982, Bartley's former mentor had joined the critics. "When I was writing editorials," said Royster, "I was always a little bit conscious of the possibility that I might be wrong. Bartley . . . is not conscious of the possibility that he is wrong." Nevertheless, Bartley's page exerted more influence than Royster's ever attempted.

That was partly because of one of Bartley's early hires. While losing out to the *Washington Post* for a brilliant young congressional staffer named George Will, Bartley did lure Jude Wanniski away from a sister publication of the *Journal*, the now defunct *National Observer*. At the Michael 1 restaurant in New York's financial district, Bartley and Wanniski met with two free-market economists—Arthur Laffer and Robert Mundell (a future Nobel laureate)—to cook up supply-side economics.

By 1994, Bartley and Wanniski

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were no longer collaborating. Today, they do not speak, disagreeing on many things but particularly U.S. policy on Israel and Iraq. Wanniski left the newspaper in 1978, but as late as 1981 Bartley was saying: "Jude had a tremendous influence over the tone and direction of the page. He taught me the power of the outrageous." Wanniski also convinced Bartley of the power of tax cuts, and the *Wall Street Journal* became the communications engine of the supply-side movement, as it never could have been under Royster.

When the Reagan administration or Republicans in Congress deviated, the *Journal*'s editorial page struck. Senate Budget Committee chairman Pete Domenici, resisting tax cuts, was attacked for Keynesian deviationism in the memorable editorial "John Maynard Domenici." Bartley debunked traditional fixations over budget and trade deficits, culminating in a book-long defense of Reaganomics: *The Seven Fat Years*.

Beyond economics, Bartley was the quintessential cold warrior. He was an intrepid fighter for freedom dedicated to the collapse of the Soviet Union who relentlessly editorialized against the arms-control mentality, including Henry Kissinger's anti-ballistic missile treaty, and exposed chronic cheating by the Kremlin. He was a regular at anti-Communist meetings throughout Europe, where Western journalists and Eastern dissenters plotted the overthrow of the Soviet imperium.

I attended one such conference in Prague in 1990—organized by the late hardline guru Albert Wohlstetter—where Bartley was obviously enjoying himself immensely. Responding to claims by Wanniski and others that a Wohlstetter "cabal" had hijacked U.S. foreign policy, Bartley claimed membership. "I'm a member of long standing in the 'cabal' now under attack," he wrote recently.

In another column, he said: "I attended Mao-Tse-tung's funeral with the cabal's high priest, Richard Perle; the improbable delegation was led by James Schlesinger. In 1979, I sat on the banks of the Bosporous eating grilled fish with Paul Wolfowitz, the cabal's current point man, and legendary Pentagon visionary Andy Marshall. In 1984, I attended a conference on the Riviera's Cap Ferrat entitled 'Fault Lines in the Soviet Empire,' examining the chance that Communism would splinter on ethnic lines, as famously happened five years later." As on most great issues, Bartley was no mere journalistic observer but a passionately involved player.

Illustration courtesy the Wall Street Journal

Since the Soviet collapse, Bartley and the "cabal" have turned to a robust foreign policy directed against terrorism and Iraq and uncompromising support for Israel. Bartley has, however, hastened to disassociate himself from Woodrow Wilson's idealism, or what he calls "the 'national greatness' crusade of a couple of editors at THE WEEKLY STANDARD."

Bartley has always marched to his own drummer. During the Watergate crisis, the *Journal* defended the sacking of Archibald Cox as special prosecutor but ended up calling for Richard Nixon's impeachment. Bartley was lonely in defending financier Michael Milken from rapacious prosecutors and the *Journal*'s own reporters. Bartley's fierce stubbornness was perhaps best exemplified in his long struggle against the ethically challenged Clintons.

I would like to close on a personal note. In 1962 when I was the lead *Wall Street Journal* correspondent covering Congress (and Bartley was starting out in the Chicago bureau), Vermont Royster came down to Washington to take me to dinner at his favorite French restaurant and offered me a job on the editorial page. I was only 31 years old, and the way Roy laid it out, it seemed I might just end up as editor some day.

I declined, telling Royster that I really loved reporting in Washington. There was also a matter of ideology. Like the young Bartley, I thought the *Journal* was a little too conservative for me. After all, like Bartley, I would vote for LBJ over Goldwater. The next year, I left the newspaper to join Rowland Evans in a syndicated column.

If I had taken Royster up on his offer, there surely were no guarantees that I would have succeeded as Bartley did. Certainly, I never could have come close to matching Bob Bartley's performance as the most influential editor of his time, indeed, as an American journalist who truly shaped his times. There never had been one quite like him before, and there may never be again. ♦

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Clones and Rael-Politik

The Jack Kevorkians of the cloning debate weigh in. BY WESLEY J. SMITH

SO THE RAELIANS, who maintain that human life was the product of cloning by space aliens, now claim that their for-profit corporation, Clonaid, has cloned the first human baby, a healthy female named Eve. There is no proof of any kind to verify this, and most of the world is highly skeptical. It took nearly 300 tries before Dolly the cloned sheep was born. While it is true that mammals like mice and cows are now cloned regularly, the failure rates in animal cloning remain very high, and efforts to clone a dog or monkey so far have failed. As for humans, an attempt by Advanced Cell Technology to clone a human embryo made headlines last year, but the embryo ceased dividing at the six-cell stage.

Still, the announcement is a triumph for the Raelians. It has set an important clock ticking. For even amid general condemnation in the media, we already see some people shrugging their shoulders and claiming you can't stop science. Last Thursday, for example, *Washington Post* pundit Richard Cohen raised the flag of surrender to Brave New World. Stating that he did not want to hear arguments about "ethics" or "human dignity," he opined that both therapeutic and reproductive cloning should go forward or science will be "forced into medical back alleys."

With help from voices like Cohen's, the Raelians are leading the way toward bio-anarchy by pursuing what I call the "Kevorkian strategy." With a sociopath's intuition, assisted-suicide pioneer Jack Kevorkian sensed that the day of the moral outlaw had arrived. He saw that in a non-judgmental age, if he were sufficiently brazen and unapologetic, he could convince people in the mainstream that they had a stake in his deadly plans—and then he could get away with almost anything.

For a time, it worked like a charm. When Kevorkian began his campaign, in 1990, the media flew into high dudgeon, just as they have over the Raelians. Scorn was heaped upon him for assisting suicides, and the light of publicity was shone on his bizarre medical career. This was the crucial moment. Had he wavered, Kevorkian would have been finished and soon forgotten. But he stayed the course. Claiming for himself the mantle of modern rationality and castigating his opponents as superstitious religionists, he turned the tide by his very defiance.

The tone of the coverage changed from criticism to something near adulation. Many, like Andy Rooney, lauded him as a courageous pioneer. Before long, Kevorkian's body dumps became almost routine. Even though most of his 130 or so victims were not terminally ill (and 5 weren't ill at all, according to their autopsies), juries refused to convict him. Before our very eyes "Wacky Jacky," as Jay Leno called him, was transformed from a pariah into a celebrity and, to some, a hero.

Kevorkian stated clearly that his ultimate goal was not to relieve suffering but to gain access to dying people upon whom to experiment: He called his human vivisection "obitiatry." But the more he thumbed his nose at propriety and morality, the more impotent the law appeared and the more popular he became. He achieved his peak the night he was wined and dined at *Time* magazine's 75th anniversary party, where mega-celebrities such as Tom Cruise rushed up to shake his hand.

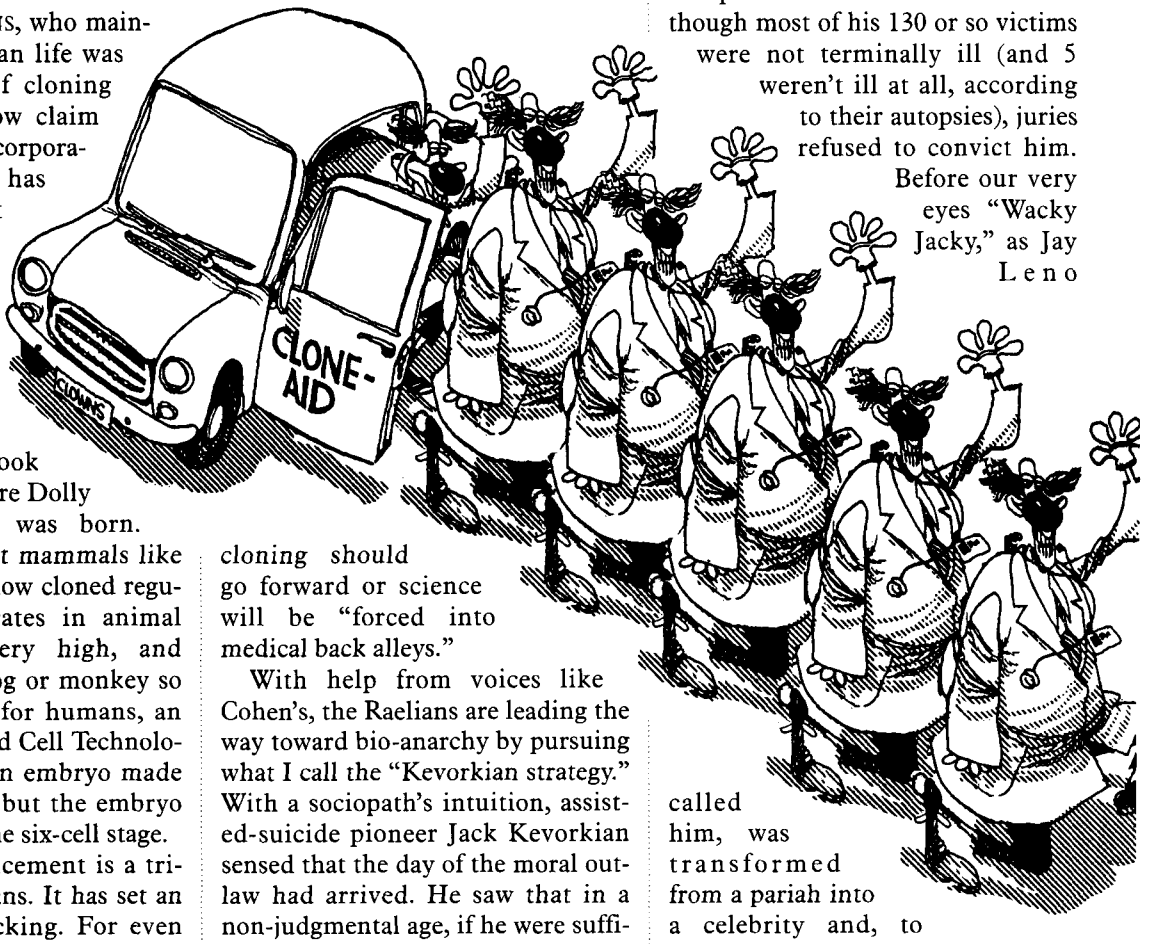

Illustration by Michael Ramirez

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But Kevorkian finally took half a step too far. He crashed to earth after videotaping himself murdering ALS patient Thomas Youk and giving the tape to a fawning Mike Wallace for broadcast on *60 Minutes* on November 22, 1998. Kevorkian's megalomania was bared for all to see. A jury sent him up the river, and he sits today in a Michigan penitentiary, a nearly forgotten man.

The Raelians and others who claim to be busily cloning human children seem to have adopted Kevorkian's strategy of defiance. Society's moral revulsion? Irrelevant. The likelihood that a cloned child would have serious health problems caused by genetic defects? Beneath concern. The Raelians and the parents willing to participate in this immoral human experimentation want what they want, the opinions of society and the health consequences be damned. The cult proudly claims to have several other cloned babies in gestation.

This sort of flouting of the law, societal norms, and/or moral sensibilities is bubbling up throughout the fields of bioethics and biotechnology. Thus, Stanford University announced in December that it is creating a research center that will clone human embryos for medical research.

Actually, unlike the Raelians and Kevorkian, Stanford lacked the courage of its convictions and pretended that what is being planned isn't human cloning at all. It even went so far as to inaccurately state that its definition of cloning was in accord with that adopted by the President's Council on Bioethics. This led Leon Kass, the head of the council, to chastise Stanford for misstating the council's position. Stanford apologized to the council but continued to insist that somatic cell nuclear transfer isn't cloning when it's done for biomedical research. Head researcher Irving Weismann hopes other institutions will follow Stanford's lead until cloning for biomedical research is utterly unremarkable.

To show how far all of this may go, the New Jersey senate just passed S-1909, a bill that would permit the cloning of human embryos for biomedical research—and apparently would also permit their implantation and gestation up until the very moment of birth before requiring their destruction. The only cloned humans outlawed by the language of the bill are newborns.

As recently as two years ago, biotech advocates were promising that *all* they wanted was to be able to use for research embryos left over from in vitro fertilization and destined to be tossed out anyway. Now, not only are cloned embryos to be manufactured, but perhaps even late-term fetuses. Thanks to in-your-face Kevorkianism and our refusal to resist it by drawing firm ethical lines for the proper regulation of biotechnology, cloned children may well be on the way even if the Raelians are lying about Eve.

The analogy with Kevorkianism suggests it may still be possible to apply the brakes: The bio-anarchists could commit some outrage sufficient to rouse Washington into passing a ban, or at least a moratorium, on all human cloning. Already some of the most "progressive" nations in the world—Canada, Australia, Norway, France, Taiwan—have banned all human cloning or soon will.

But it took eight years to stop Kevorkian—and his assisted-suicide movement continues to thrive. With the pace at which biotechnology is advancing, we don't have that kind of time. While cranks like the Raelians may be discredited, the movement they represent is plunging ahead. ♦

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No-Goodnik Likudniks

A funny thing happened on the way to Sharon's easy victory. BY TOM ROSE

Jerusalem

THERE ARE FEW THINGS Israelis love more than a salacious domestic scandal. That much was proven here last week when the uncovering of an al Qaeda plot to murder thousands of Israelis with chemical weapons failed to knock off the front pages the corruption scandal featuring vote buying, influence peddling, underworld figures, and of course sex that has clouded the reelection prospects of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and his Likud party.

Like elected leaders everywhere, Sharon began his current campaign before all the votes from the last one had been counted. In 2001, his landslide victory over Ehud Barak was possible only because former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, then the country's most popular politician, had decided not to run. Correctly surmising that Netanyahu would seek next time to become party leader himself, Sharon set about to purge the Likud of Netanyahu loyalists and replace them with his own supporters. Sharon's deputies, led by his 38-year-old son Omri, appear not to have let Israel's strict campaign finance laws get in their way. They managed to add nearly 60,000 new members, or 13 percent of the total, to the Likud party's rolls between March 2001 and November 28, 2002, when the party primary was held. As it happened, Netanyahu did indeed challenge Sharon for the leadership—and lost by a margin of 13 percentage points.

Ariel Sharon

Illustration by Drew Friedman

Unlike in the United States, where voting in primaries is usually open to any voter registered with the party, in Israel, voting in primaries is a privilege reserved for dues-paying party members. That Omri Sharon enlisted 60,000 new members was extraordinary enough. That they all managed to pay their $10 dues was downright amazing. Too amazing, as it turns out.

The most serious and probably hardest to prove of all the allegations center around Sharon's son. Omri Sharon allegedly recruited the services of a convicted felon and reputed underworld figure named Shlomi Oz to buy a security company owned by his own ex-girlfriend, which would "bid" for contracts to "provide protection" to Likud-associated businesses, the profits of which would pay the membership fees for the party's 60,000 new members. The implication is that Omri Sharon hired Shlomi Oz to create a protection racket.

Yet the public has been much more interested in the juicier revelations surrounding the Likud's selection of its candidates for parliament. Under Israel's proportional representation system, votes are cast for party slates, and seats in the Knesset are distributed among the parties according to their share of the national vote. A party winning 40 percent of the vote wins 40 percent of the seats, and so on.

It is the parties that determine which individuals will represent them in the Knesset. This year, 145 candidates vied in the primary for slots on the Likud list. Their showing in the primary determined their place on the list and thus their likelihood of securing a seat. While the party leader is chosen in a primary open to all 310,000 dues-paying Likud members, the party's list is selected by the 2,940 members of the Likud's all-powerful Central Committee. With so few electors, so many candidates, and very little oversight, it is perhaps no wonder that a 25-year-old Tel Aviv

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waitress could finish in twenty-ninth place, five places higher than Jerusalem mayor Ehud Olmert, making her a shoo-in to sit in the next Knesset.

As in all democracies, power is a commodity, and in the Likud, as the *Jerusalem Report*'s Gershon Gorenberg has written, the Central Committee is the market where power is bought and sold. Central Committee members have a lot of it, and few qualms about using it. Professional brokers offered to match candidates seeking votes with Central Committee members seeking bribes. It appears that there was no shortage of either.

Now, as the January 28 national election nears, Prime Minister Sharon is trying to get the voters' minds back on what was supposed to be the campaign's dominant issue: the fight against Palestinian terrorism. Even though Israel's left-wing Labor party still appears headed toward collapse and Sharon's Likud toward comfortable victory, the scandal has taken more than its pound of flesh. Polls that in mid-December predicted 41 seats for the Likud two weeks later showed it winning 31, with disgruntled voters moving toward smaller parties of the hard right and center. The Labor party, led by Haifa mayor Amram Mitzna, has been unable to capitalize on the scandal because voters seem more troubled by its policy of unilateral withdrawal to the 1967 borders than they are by Likud Central Committee members' and Knesset candidates' apparent willingness to buy and sell votes for meals, prostitutes, or cash.

As embarrassing as it has been for the Likud party and the country, the vote-buying scandal of 2003 in the end should strengthen Israel's democracy. Prime Minister Sharon says cleaning up the mess in the Likud is now his top priority. With a fresh mandate and his retirement at the end of his new term already announced, he should enjoy the freedom necessary to fulfill that pledge. ♦

United They Fall

Unions won't prosper if American corporations don't. BY STEPHEN MOORE

LAST WEEK the machinists' union indignantly rejected the latest contract offer by bankrupt United Airlines, complaining that they were being unfairly rushed into a bad deal. One could only wonder whether the union bosses have lost all sense of economic reality. With $2 billion in debt and daily operating losses in the millions, United has to cut costs dramatically in the next several months or the airline will be out of business.

The unions are hardly innocent victims of the demise of United, which not that long ago was a financial titan among airlines. In fact, the extravagant pay scales union members enjoy is one reason for United's swift plummet toward insolvency. Through collective bargaining, United pilots and mechanics have extracted pay structures that are by leaps and bounds the highest in the industry. Such costs have made the airline hopelessly uncompetitive against discount rivals like Southwest and JetBlue. Federal officials cited out-of-control salaries as a primary explanation for turning down United's recent $1.8 billion-dollar loan guarantee request. It would appear that the pilots and mechanics will soon discover an important lesson: The alternative to accepting reduced salaries will be no jobs at all.

The United labor fracas raises the question of whether unions have so outserved their usefulness that they are now doing more harm than good for American workers. The unions are already losing hundreds of thousands of members every year, and their recent behavior suggests that labor bosses are intent on accelerating their own demise.

Consider, for example, the narrowly averted New York Transit strike, in which the union was demanding massive pay increases from an all-but-bankrupt municipal agency. New York City is facing its worst fiscal crisis since the late 1970s (when President Ford allegedly told the city to "drop dead"). Yet the comatose transit union, whose workers already receive about 30 to 40 percent more compensation than comparably skilled private sector workers, demanded even more concessions from the city. Lord knows where the money was supposed to come from.

Then there is the headline-grabbing case of the dockworker strike on the West Coast this past October. The dockworkers, who with overtime can earn six-figure salaries, were essentially striking against the evils of technological progress. The union's beef was with the decision to automate the tabulation of containers moving in and out of ports. This would be the economic equivalent of the accounting profession trying to block the introduction of calculators. "I'm not talking about Star Wars," one industry executive pleaded. "I'm talking about everyday technology. Think supermarket scanners. FedEx or UPS tracking systems. Simple information management." Said another: "The top ports in Asia, and in Europe, are at least a decade ahead of us. Our ports literally cannot keep up."

Before President Bush invoked the Taft-Hartley Act to suspend the work stoppage, the American economy was losing an estimated $1 billion a day in output and, throughout the economy, thousands of union and non-union jobs were put at risk.

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REUTERS / Justin Sullivan

In each of these cases, the labor unions' irrational objections to technological change and economic reality have needlessly reduced the profitability and the competitiveness of American firms. The Luddite attitude of "man versus machine" will not protect jobs or raise wage scales. Just the opposite: Throughout the last century, computerization and technological progress have been the driving force behind the increased productivity of workers and their higher salaries. For example, one study recently found that when an employee works with a computer in front of him, his salary is likely to be $10,000 to $20,000 higher than if he is without one.

One of the most baffling and self-defeating of union tactics is the $1 million TV and radio campaign by the Communications Workers of America against Verizon, the Baby Bell of the Northeast. As even the most casual investor knows, the last three years have been brutally unkind to the telecom industry. In 2000, the telecom sector contracted by 28 percent and bled almost $1.7 trillion in lost share values. Overall telecom expenditures are down 45 percent this year—a cut in capital investment of over $30 billion. More than half a million telecom workers have lost their jobs.

That hasn't deterred the CWA from spending members' dues blasting Verizon's planned cutbacks of about 3,500 jobs in the New York region. The union complains with some validity that the firm is paying million-dollar bonuses to management even as it executes its downsizing plans. Those bonuses do seem unwarranted given the wobbly financial condition of the industry.

But the larger economic reality here is that Verizon is losing revenue as government regulations force it to lease phone lines to competitor companies at fire-sale rates. The firm is losing hundreds of thousands of phone lines to competitors, and its landline business is surrendering market share to cell phones, e-mail, and cable telephony. Meanwhile the incendiary union ads heap abuse on Verizon and characterize management as a gang of corporate crooks.

How is this going to help communications workers? The strategy makes about as much sense as Kobe Bryant and Allen Iverson running TV ads encouraging fans not to go to NBA games. It is precisely such self-destructive union policies that have made new age industries, including high tech, fiercely anti-union.

Over the past 30 years, union membership as a share of the workforce has fallen by half. Only one in six workers today is a dues-paying union member, and the percentage of private sector union workers is much lower than that. In fact, pollster Scott Rasmussen has pointed out that on Election Day, three times as many voters were stock owners than union members. These workers understand that their 401(k) plans and their IRAs are dependent on the profitability of American industry.

This reality—that workers can prosper only when the companies they work for do—has eluded many union officials. ♦

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The Spy Who Came in from the Mosque

Reda Hassaine fled Islamist violence in Algeria. Then in London he infiltrated bin Laden's network.

By Jake Tapper

London

"I'm very happy," Reda Hassaine says, a few minutes before almost breaking down in tears. His joy comes from his role in gathering evidence against Abu Qatada, an extremist Muslim cleric said to be a key al Qaeda figure, who was arrested in London in late October, just days before Hassaine and I talked. Hassaine, 41, is an Algerian Muslim who has spied on militant Islamist groups for the Algerian Secret Service, the French, Scotland Yard's Special Branch, and MI5, the British intelligence agency. He won't be completely happy, though, until another London-based Islamist—Abu Hamza—is also behind bars.

Reda Hassaine

CBC TV News

Qatada and Hamza, he says, "raise money, encourage people to kill, claim assassinations." Hassaine knows this firsthand, he says, having seen their handiwork in Algeria and spied on them for various European intelligence agencies. Hassaine has a sad face and a stammer that improves with each bottle of Chianti, though it is fast replaced by melancholy. He chain smokes, enjoying the meal I've bought him, while he talks me through his journey from up-and-coming Algerian reporter to down-on-his-luck London ex-spy.

Hassaine's story is a reminder that Muslims themselves have been the biggest victims of the rise of Islamist extremists. It's not difficult to discern the moral in his tale: that worldwide indifference to the horrors of Algeria in the 1990s helped pave Osama bin Laden's path to the World Trade Center. Moreover, Hassaine suggests that the West has been—and probably still is—unprepared to fend off the Islamist threat, though he is not without hope.

"On the 11th of September, I was happy in one way," he admits at one point. Not that he wasn't horrified by the attacks. It's just that "for years and years I've been trying to warn people about what the Islamists are doing," he says. "Now I know George Bush is with me. Now I know Tony Blair is with me. But I have been working on this for years and years."

In the early 1990s, during Algeria's brief flirtation with democracy, Hassaine was part of the growing opposition to the government. "They were corrupt and only working for themselves," Hassaine says. In 1990, he was elected a party official in the populist hodgepodge of opposition known as the Islamic Salvation Front, or FIS. But a few days later he resigned, after realizing that FIS leader Abassi Madani was a megalomaniac who "saw himself as the new caliph"—meaning a successor to the Prophet Muhammad and political, military, and administrative leader of the Muslim world.

"I met plenty of FIS people, and we talked about how the party should work, and then I found out what kind of

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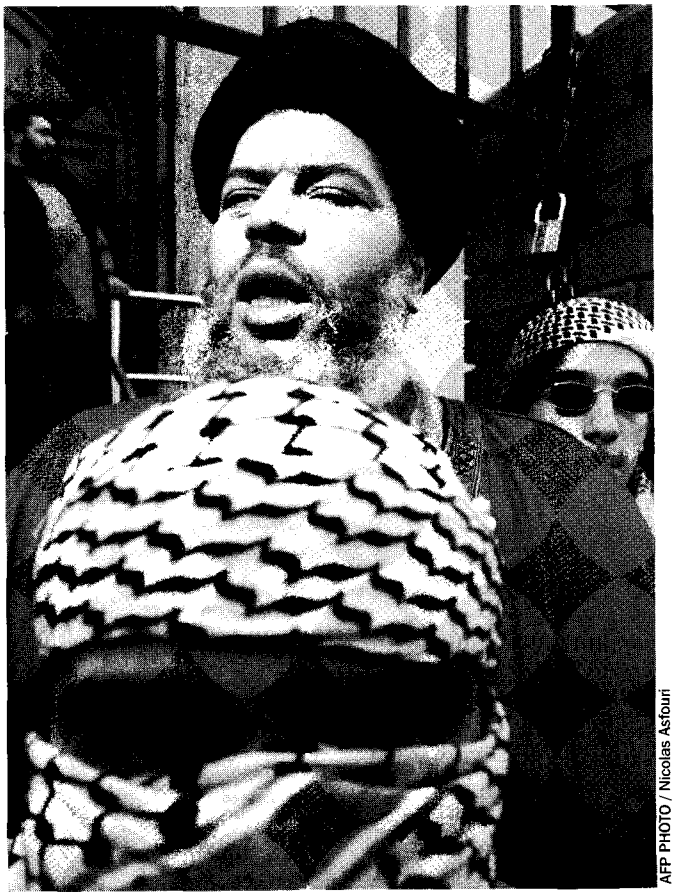
people they are," he says. "They were using the election to get all the power and destroy the state." Hassaine says that after meeting Madani and the other FIS leaders he understood that they were planning on "going to war."

War? I ask. Against whom?

"Against the population," Hassaine replies.

When it became clear in late 1991 that Algeria's first multiparty election would bring the FIS to power, the military "canceled the election," Hassaine says. Soon the hotheaded pronouncements at FIS meetings were no longer just talk. The party's militant wing, the Groupe Islamique Armé, or GIA, swung into violent action. "Then started the killing. The policemen first. Then the journalists. They had lists of people to be killed."

Hassaine's colleagues started getting assassinated. The first, in May 1993, was Tahar Djaout, editor in chief of a cultural weekly and an award-winning novelist. Other journalists—good men, Muslim men—were slaughtered. One of Hassaine's good friends—Mohamed Abderrahmani, editor in chief of the government's French-language daily—"left his home to take one of his kids to school," Hassaine recalls. His eyes fill with tears as he shapes his hand into a gun. "Pow! Pow! Pow! Pow!"



AFP PHOTO / Nicolas Asfouri

Abu Hamza (top) entering the Finsbury Park mosque

Hassaine was working the night shift at a newspaper when he heard that Abderrahmani had been killed. He took a call from one of the terrorists responsible.

"We killed him," the caller said. "He should be now in hell!"

Then Mohamed Mekati, chief foreign editor of *El-Moudjahidan*, an established daily paper. "I never saw in my life a Muslim like him," Hassaine says. "I mean, I am a Muslim. But I drink." Mekati was something else—devout, pious, focused. "Like a ninja," Hassaine says. Islamists killed him, too.

Explosions, rapes, slaughters. Algeria was destroyed from the inside out. More than 120 foreign citizens were killed in the early days. Monks, church dignitaries, a bishop—murdered. Factories, schools, bridges—destroyed. A car bomb was driven into the national police headquarters in 1995, killing 42 and wounding 265. Entire villages were massacred. "They started to kill everyone," says Hassaine. "Kill, kill, as much as you can."

The State Department's 1998 human rights report is typical of a decade of horror: "Armed Islamists continued their widespread campaign of insurgency, targeting government officials and families of security members, as well as persons whose lifestyles they consider to be in conflict with Islamic values. Armed groups continued to kill numerous civilians, including infants, by massacres and small bombs. Armed Islamists particularly targeted women; there were numerous instances of kidnapping and rape. Bombs left in cars, cafes, and markets killed and maimed persons indiscriminately."

"How can I explain this to Westerners?" Hassaine asks. "These kind of people, they had been brainwashed in Afghanistan. When I left Algeria, people wanted to kill me. My closest friend, 35 of my colleagues, had been killed by Islamists in the GIA. They were taking babies and putting them in the ovens."

Human rights organizations estimate that up to 100,000 Algerians have been killed in the civil war that began in 1992.

"Most of the world closed their embassies," Hassaine says. "For them it was a question of internal [Algerian politics]. The world, they didn't see the threat coming to them. 'Let them kill themselves, let them fight themselves, as long as they don't touch us.'"

But this attitude ignored the fact that Algeria was just one battlefield in a larger war, and that the GIA was one of the main organizations feeding Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network. "That's why I was happy on

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the 11th of September, with all respect to the families who lost their loved ones," he says.

"My best friend—" he starts to say, then stops. He grows quiet and looks off in the distance. Tears well in his eyes. "These people want to destroy, not to build. They have nothing to offer. They offer 'paradise.' The Wahhabis—they killed Islam."

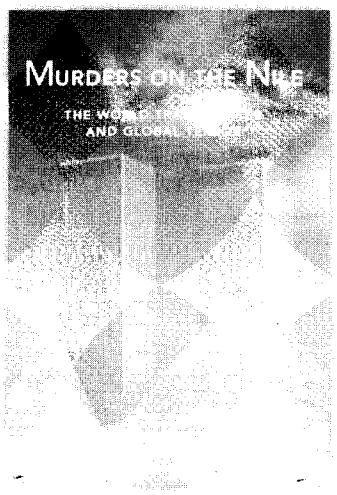
In 1994, Hassaine and his family fled to London. "I was not going to let my baby get put in an oven," he says. He was able to leave only by making a deal with Algerian security services to help them spy on the GIA. Then in 1998, as France began preparing to host the World Cup, its law enforcement agencies anticipated a terrorist attack. A man from the French Embassy in London whom Hassaine knew only as "Jerome" recruited him to obtain information about any possible attacks.

"They were giving me the chance to get revenge," Hassaine says. A bin Ladenist paper was set up, with Hassaine as editor. "People knew me as a journalist in Algeria. So it was a nice cover." He began providing the French with as much information as he could glean from days and nights spent praying, eating, talking with various extremists. When the French didn't come through with an offer of citizenship, Hassaine volunteered to help the British.

In 1999, the Special Branch asked Hassaine to infiltrate London's now-notorious Finsbury Park mosque, whose imam Abu Hamza preached jihad to the likes of shoebomber Richard Reid. Hassaine was already familiar with Hamza and his ally Abu Qatada—both of them among the top GIA supporters in London. He held them responsible, in no small way, for what had happened in Algeria.

"Hamza was the first spiritual leader of GIA," he says. "Abu Qatada and Abu Hamza, they are responsible for the killing of tens of thousands of people." According to the BBC, Qatada has circulated a pamphlet reveling in the murders of Algerian policemen, while Hamza once issued a fatwa in favor of assassinating various Middle Eastern public figures as well as a 2-year-old Algerian child.

In December 1998, twelve Britons, two Australians, two Americans, and four local drivers were taken hostage by Yemeni terrorists, who telephoned Hamza within an hour of the kidnapping. The Yemeni government attempted a rescue, in which four of the hostages were



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MURDERS ON THE NILE

THE WORLD TRADE CENTER AND GLOBAL TERROR

By J. Bowyer Bell

"*Murders on the Nile* stands out in a crowded field by its historical perspective, deep understanding of the Middle East, and the author's first-hand knowledge of how terrorists operate. If you want to know how we got to September 11, read this book."

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In *Murders on the Nile, the World Trade Center and Global Terror*, J. Bowyer Bell takes us back to the cradle of Islamic discontent, showing how terror arose along the banks of the Nile a century ago amidst the grievances of an Egypt held in bondage by foreign imperialists and local despots. The most zealous of these lethal idealists found in righteous murder a proper means to shape their vision of an ideal Islamic society free from the contaminating influence of Westernization. Bell shows how this homicidal heritage developed and was first brought to America by Sheikh Abdel Rahman, the blind cleric who masterminded the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993. In describing this genealogy of terror, Bell shows how what began as murders on the Nile, ultimately became murders on the Hudson as well.

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killed. The Yemeni government, which also accused Hamza of sending ten jihadists (including his own son) there to attack Western targets in Aden, sought Hamza's extradition, "to be tried on charges of carrying out terrorist activities in Yemen and in several other Arab states."

The request was denied; the British government has no extradition agreement with Yemen, a fact that has rankled numerous governments ranging from Jordan to the United States in their attempts to fight terrorism. As this international struggle went on, British authorities asked Hassaine for reports on Hamza and his associates, as well as a detailed map of the Finsbury Park mosque and all its escape routes.

The information presumably proved useful when Scotland Yard arrested Hamza and two other men in a morning raid in March 1999. But four days later they were released. The authorities didn't feel the case was strong enough. "I was shocked," Hassaine says. "There is a big problem in the law here in London." Islamists "can claim assassinations, they can do propaganda. And all these things are 'freedom of expression'—even if you call for killing of people. The law is very, very weak. If these people had been in France, they would be in jail a long time ago."

Having split from his wife, at least partly out of concern for her and their two children, and still seeking non-Algerian citizenship, Hassaine was assured that his asylum application would soon be taken care of. In the meantime the Special Branch passed his name on to MI5, which soon had him hanging out with Algerian extremists in London plotting various attacks.

He saw a lot—from the inside. Abu Qatada recruited shoe-bomber Richard Reid and "20th hijacker" Zacarias Moussaoui, Hassaine says. "I saw them. Abu Qatada is the best brainwasher there is."

In April 2000, Hassaine, working with his MI5 handlers, "went to check on information about somebody who went to Afghanistan to meet with Osama bin Laden." At the Finsbury Park mosque, he stumbled onto an odd gathering of the most hard-core congregants and some "strange" talk of martyrdom and holy warriors. Hassaine was chased down and beaten. "They tried to kill me," he says.

Had his cover been blown? I ask. Who told them he was working for the government? What was his mistake?

"I didn't have time to ask them why they were doing it," says an exasperated Hassaine. "I lost two teeth. See this?" he points to a scar on his nose. "I was very scared," he says. MI5 wasn't interested in pursuing his attackers. "They told me, what do you want? Do you want the guy who beat you or Abu Qatada?" MI5 told him that he had been compromised, that he should be quiet for awhile.

Seeing Hamza walk the London streets infuriates Hassaine, as does reading his comments quoted in the newspaper. Just recently, Hassaine says, one of the leaders of the Finsbury Park mosque "was calling for people to do jihad against Americans and even the British if they attack Iraq. So they are still free in Finsbury Park and saying what they want. And doing what they want. And as long as Abu Hamza is free the threat is here. Because his aim is to be killed one day by doing jihad."

Although Hamza's assets have been frozen because of his alleged membership in the Islamic Army of Aden—which has been linked to the October 2000 bombing of the USS *Cole*—he remains a free man, and an outspoken one. After the al Qaeda bombing of Israeli tourists in Kenya, Hamza told reporters that "by forcing al Qaeda to scatter around the world, Mr. Bush has made a mistake. He has given the inspiration for a global jihad." Qatada, meanwhile, is in prison in London, one of 10 individuals being held by British authorities under the 2001 anti-terrorism act.

Unfortunately for Hassaine, as his usefulness as a spy evaporated, so too did the British government's pledge to honor his request for asylum, which was rejected, convincing him to go to the British press with the story of his exploits two years ago. He is permitted to stay in the U.K., but unlike Hamza—a British citizen since 1985—Hassaine is subject to deportation at any time.

"My life is f—ed," he says. "I don't know what I'm going to do with my life now."

Hassaine reserves his animosity for Islamists. I tell him that I think it odd and not a little disappointing that someone like him isn't being utilized by the British and French governments, not to mention ours, but all he'll say in response is that Algerians like him do have a lot experience with Islamic extremists.

"The British and the Americans—of course they are doing their job, they are trying to solve the problem," he says. "But it will not be easy. They need the help of Arab people. If they think that the technology or the power or the arms or something like that, yes, it does help. But it will not be enough."

But in the end they didn't treat you that well, I say. And it doesn't sound like they had that firm a grasp on what they were doing. Didn't he think that they should have treated him better?

"Me? I don't know," he says. "I did what I had to do. By myself. Nobody told me to do it." He says he doesn't fear for his safety anymore.

"If I will be killed," he says, "PFFFT! It will be as a martyr." ♦

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The (Hon.) Shills

The last place to look for honest analysis on Saudi Arabia is from most of our previous ambassadors to the kingdom.

By Josh Chafetz

In a time of international strife, when Americans are struggling to understand an unfamiliar part of the globe, one wishes we could call on a cadre of experts who had lived in the region and were experienced in promoting American values and interests. One would think that former U.S. ambassadors to the Middle East—including ambassadors to our traditionally closest Arab ally, Saudi Arabia—would be naturals for this role. But one would be wrong. Instead, most members of this cadre have spent their time since September 11, 2001, shilling, spinning, and distorting the news to fit not American but Saudi interests. And—surprise, surprise—it turns out that many of them are on the Saudi payroll.

The former ambassadors profess themselves shocked at accusations that the Saudi monarchy might in some way be tied to funding for terrorists. Over and over they tell us—as Bush Sr.'s envoy to Riyadh, Chas W. Freeman Jr., told *National Journal*—that "al Qaeda is directed first and foremost at the overthrow of the Saudi monarchy," and of course the monarchy would never intentionally fund its chief enemy. Freeman is president of a company that helps arrange global business deals, including many in Arab countries. Clinton appointee Wyche Fowler Jr.—now chairman of the board of the Middle East Institute, which receives over 13 percent of its budget from Saudi sources—told the *New York Times* that "Saudis are not in the business of funding terrorists against their friend, the United States." Reagan appointee Richard W. Murphy goes even further: "They don't fund terror. I mean, they've been accused of sending hijackers to the planes on September 11. The target of September 11 was the Saudi regime, not the United States."

But if al Qaeda hates the Saudi monarchy more than it hates the United States, it sure has a funny way of showing it: Of the two known al Qaeda attacks on Saudi soil, both were directed against U.S. military targets. Furthermore, Saudi authorities did everything in their power to frustrate U.S. investigations into those attacks, including beheading suspects in the 1995 bombing of a Riyadh building used by U.S. military trainers before the FBI could interrogate those suspects. This didn't stop Fowler from assuring CNN's Mark Shields in October 2001 that Saudi Arabia can "absolutely, without any question" be considered an ally in the war on terrorism.

Even less convincing is the ambassadors' claim that everyone in Saudi Arabia loves America. Fowler told Wolf Blitzer in December 2001 that "there hadn't been any hatred being spewed out of Saudi Arabia . . . against us." Fowler was apparently unaware of a Saudi survey two months earlier which found that 95 percent of educated Saudis between the ages of 25 and 41 supported Osama bin Laden's cause. In January 2002, Freeman told the Middle East Policy Council Forum, "It is widely charged in the United States that Saudi Arabian education teaches hateful and evil things. I do not think that is the case." He didn't bother to explain an October 2001 *New York Times* article which found that textbooks required for Saudi high school students contain "extremist, anti-Western" messages; for example, the statement: "It is compulsory for the Muslims to be loyal to each other and to consider the infidels their enemy." And when Freeman proclaimed that Saudi social attitudes had moved forward "centuries in 50 years," one couldn't help but remember the Saudi girls who burned to death in Mecca last March after the religious police refused to let them leave their burning school building because they were not wearing proper Islamic dress.

Glossing over such minor inconveniences, the former ambassadors tell us that things couldn't be better in the kingdom. Crown Prince Abdullah "is running the country, and doing it quite well," Nixon appointee James E. Akins told the *Christian Science Monitor*. He also informed the *Monitor* that Saudi Arabia is "moving toward representative government," although those of us less expert in the region are still waiting for evidence.

But evidence isn't exactly the ambassadors' strong

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suit. Murphy, sounding like a parody of himself, told the House Armed Services Committee in May that "the danger of Wahhabism is—and I don't like to even refer to it as a danger—the danger is the export. Because in Saudi Arabia they're not training up people to be bloody attackers, savages of—savagers of the West, of the United States. It's when it is exported into a community where there is no other funding for education, where there's no ministry operable—in the northwest province of Pakistan is one good example." Fifteen of the nineteen "bloody attackers" of September 11, however, were Saudis. None was a Pakistani. Moreover, according to a classified list put together by U.S. intelligence agencies, 7 of the 9 top financiers for al Qaeda and other Islamist terrorist groups are Saudi. And, by some accounts, 80 percent of the detainees at Guantanamo hail from the kingdom.

Even more absurdly, Fowler told CNN's Jeff Greenfield that "Wahhabism . . . does teach tolerance for Jews and Christians." Perhaps Fowler should tell that to Sheikh Muhammad Al-Saleh Al-'Athimein, who, in a sermon at the Great Mosque in Al-'Unayza, Saudi Arabia, said, "The Jews are treacherous and deceitful people over whom lies the curse and anger of Allah. . . . He cursed them and turned them into apes and pigs." Or Sheikh Nasser Muhammad Al-Ahmad, who, in a sermon at the Al-Nour mosque in Al-Khobar, said, "Moral corruption is a general trait of the Jews, all the Jews. . . . If you want to know the Jew through and through, imagine a group of perverse moral traits." Or perhaps he should speak with Sheikh Muhammad bin Abd Al-Rahman Al-'Arifi, imam of the mosque of King Fahd Defense Academy, who recently wrote, "We will control the land of the Vatican; we will control Rome and introduce Islam in it. Yes, the Christians . . . will yet pay us the *Jiziya* [poll tax paid by non-Muslims under Muslim rule], in humiliation, or they will convert to Islam." In fact, anyone can read these and hundreds of other recent examples of Wahhabi tolerance at *memri.org*, the website of the Middle East Media Research Institute, which performs the invaluable service of translating Arabic media and sermons into English. But when former U.S. arms control director Ken Adelman pointed this out to Fowler on CNN's *Wolf Blitzer Reports*, Fowler dismissively (and cluelessly) responded, "I guess that the last word I think I can say on this is my evidence doesn't come from chatrooms and websites."

But why appeal to evidence, when it can only get in the way of your favorite pastime, which, if you happen to be a former U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia, is probably insinuating that the United States is at least partly to blame for September 11? Fowler, less than a month after the attacks, told a business symposium in Atlanta: "To continually say that 'they attacked our freedom' is not by any means the total picture. . . . It's probably our foreign policy that is the source of several of the grievances." In case there was any doubt about what he meant, he told *National Journal* the same thing: "The anger that has fueled extremism in the region can be partially tied to [Arab] distaste for U.S. foreign policy."

We needn't bother asking which policy he's talking about: "In the Arab world, the Palestinian cause has become the prism through which all policy is filtered. The Arabs believe in the cause. They know that Israel is on occupied land," Fowler told the *Charlotte Observer*. Akins told the *Boston Globe* that, as a result of our stance towards Israel, "there has never been such anti-American feeling." He added, "Abdullah has really put his neck out" proffering the Saudi peace plan. You remember the Saudi peace plan. It was that strikingly banal statement of the stunningly obvious: Peace will come only when Israel pulls out of the occupied territories and the entire Arab world agrees to recognize Israel's existence. The plan, of course, said nothing as to why Israel should begin withdrawing from the territories while Palestinian terrorists were still using the territories as staging grounds for attacks on Israeli civilians. Nor did it suggest a way to put an end to those attacks. But that was no obstacle to Reagan appointee Walter Cutler—now head of the Meridian International Center, of which he says Saudi donors have been "very supportive." Cutler told the *Christian Science Monitor*: "The Saudi plan provides a framework to work from. The time is ripe to put some major flesh on those bones."

If Palestinian terrorism doesn't bother the ambassadors too much, then why should Saudi financing of Palestinian terrorism?

Perhaps the ambassadors are unconcerned about terrorism against Israel because, well, one person's terrorist group is another person's political party. Murphy expressed outrage that the Bush administration would target Hezbollah in the war on terror: "Hezbollah," he said, "is in the process of turning into a Lebanese political party, and that is toward mainstream Lebanese politics." It only made the list in the war on terror, he said, because of the "unsettled grudges of the 1980s." This statement was made while Hezbollah continued to launch missiles against Israeli citizens from Lebanese territory. Ambassador Freeman, taking the high road, advised capitulation to the terrorists: "I'm a very practical man, and my concern is simply this: that there are movements, like Hamas, like Hezbollah, that in recent decades have

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Michael Ramirez

analogize the administration's desire for regime change in Iraq to Islamist terrorism, referring to the "American crusade, jihad, I don't know what it is—struggle against Saddam." And Fowler whined to the *Charlotte Observer*, "We did a job on [Saddam]; that's been 10 years ago. [Arabs] do not understand why we won't leave him alone."

The former ambassadors don't exactly have a sterling track record when it comes to prognostications. Akins predicted the imminent demise of the House of Saud in a 1979 cable to the White House, and Fowler told the *New York Times* that, "with hindsight," he wished he'd "thought to raise" the issue of young Saudis' heading off to jihad. On October 30, 2001, Freeman told a forum at the Cato Institute, "We are successfully rearranging the rubble in Afghanistan, but we have flushed no terrorists from the earth"; also, "there is increased Afghan unity behind the Taliban." Within two weeks, Mazar-i-Sharif and Kabul had fallen, and Kandahar would fall soon after.

not done anything against the United States or Americans, even though the United States supports their enemy, Israel. By openly stating and taking action to make them—to declare that we are their enemy, we invite them to extend their operations in the United States or against Americans abroad." Neville Chamberlain would be so proud.

And, of course, if Palestinian terrorism doesn't bother the ambassadors too much, then why should Saudi financing of Palestinian terrorism? When Bill O'Reilly asked Murphy whether he'd been surprised to learn that the Saudis were giving money to the families of suicide bombers, Murphy replied, "No, they're giving money to widows and orphans, which has been a longstanding act of charity on their part, and they're not funding terrorists."

But it's not just terrorists that the ambassadors are interested in appeasing—it's tyrants, too. Akins, for example, signed an open letter to President Bush arguing against an attack on Iraq. The letter stated, "We are concerned that any new military strikes would further erode any possibility of access for the vitally needed U.N. arms inspectors in Iraq"—as if inspection, rather than disarmament, were the goal. Freeman told NPR's *Morning Edition*, "There's something inherently illegitimate about one country conquering another and then proposing to remake it in the new image," although he was silent as to the "legitimacy" of Saddam's rule. In fact, at a Middle East Policy Council Forum, Freeman went so far as to

The relevant question isn't whether these former ambassadors have sold out for Saudi money or whether the Saudis fund them because they are naturally inclined to act as mouthpieces for the House of Saud. Instead, the relevant questions are, first, why we listen to them, and, second, why we continue to appoint people like them. The current ambassador, George W. Bush appointee Robert Jordan, is out of the same mold: He penned an obsequious op-ed in the *Dallas Morning News* last June asserting that the kingdom remains a steadfast ally. Indeed, as Thomas Friedman reported in October 2001, since King Fahd requested that Ambassador Hume Horan—a notable exception to the pattern delineated above—be withdrawn in 1988 (reportedly because the Saudi government disapproved of Horan's habit of talking to the regime's critics), the United States has never again sent an Arabic speaker as our emissary to Riyadh. Small wonder, then, that they return knowing little other than what the Saudi government has chosen to tell them. They go in as dupes, and they come home as shills. ♦

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The UN and Israel

Is the Jewish state getting a fair shake from the world body?

Several years ago, we published one of our clarifying messages under the heading of "The UN and the Middle East." In it, we described how the UN seems to be totally obsessed with Israel. Now, a few years later, it might be time to revisit the topic.

What are the facts?

An outcast: Israel is indeed an outcast in the United Nations and thus, by extension, a pariah in the whole world. Though founded in 1948 – over fifty years ago and at about the same time as many other countries in the wake of World War II – its "legitimacy," its "right to exist," are still being questioned and a topic of constant debate in the UN.

Following the 1967 Six-Day War, the hostility of the United Nations against Israel expanded out of all bounds. Between 1967 and 1988, the UN Security Council passed 88 Resolutions against Israel and the UN General Assembly passed more than 400.

In 1974, Yassir Arafat addressed the General Assembly with a holstered pistol on his hip and received a standing ovation by that body. The hostility against Israel reached its peak in 1975, when the General Assembly passed Resolution 3379 declaring "Zionism as a form of racism." This infamous Resolution remained in effect for sixteen years when, under intense pressure from the United States, it was finally repealed.

> "Instead of condemning and hating Israel, [the underdeveloped countries] should take it as an example of how to build an advanced, prosperous and competent nation."

What is the reason for the collective hostility of the UN against Israel? All of this hostility is based on the very structure of the United Nations. In the General Assembly, 130 of the 190 members will always, automatically, vote against Israel. The inner circle of this hatred is the core of twenty Arab nations, which initiates the harshest condemnations of Israel. Those countries are part of the larger 56-member Muslim group, which can reliably be counted on automatically to join the Arab block in their anti-Israel Resolutions. And those countries are almost always joined by the "non-aligned" group, which are essentially the underdeveloped countries of the world. They have little interest in Israel, but they are united in their hatred of the United States and consider Israel its surrogate. Each country in the General Assembly counts the same. The vote of the United States counts the same as that of, say, Rwanda or the Ivory Coast.

The greatest outrage is that of the 190 members of the UN, Israel, not being a full member of any of the "regional groups," is the only country that cannot be a member of the Security Council, the most important body of the UN. Syria, deservedly classified as a terrorist state, has just been elected to a 2-year term on that Council. Such outlaw countries as Libya, Iran, North Korea, and even Saddam Hussein's Iraq are eligible for membership. Israel is not.

The most virulent center of anti-Israel activities within the UN. The Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) has classified Israel as the principal human rights violator in the world today. Since its inception, about 25% of its Resolutions have condemned Israel. Such egregious human rights violations as those of China in Tibet, or of Russia in Chechnya don't even come to the floor for discussion. The genocide in Rwanda, the ethnic cleansing in Yugoslavia, the horrifying "communal strife" in Indonesia's East Timor, the "disappearance" of a few hundred thousand refugees in the Congo, and the ruthless rampage of the Sudanese Muslims against the Christians are not found worthy of the attention of the Human Rights Commission.

Such outlandish canards as the "blood libel," that Jews use the blood of Muslims and Christians for the baking of their Passover matzos or of the Israelis injecting Arab children with the AIDS virus are earnestly discussed in that forum.

Finally, there is the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) which was established in 1949 to assist the Palestinian "refugees" created by the Arabs' attempt to destroy Israel at its birth. For more than 50 years, UNRWA has fully funded and essentially administers the so-called "refugee camps" – hotbeds of murderous anti-Israel activity, including the notorious camp in Jenin, which is the source of most of the suicide bombers who have so far killed over six hundred Israeli civilians and wounded thousands more.

Obviously, the pressure that the Arabs and other Muslim countries are able to exert because of their disproportionate economic power is the main cause of the anti-Israelism (anti-Semitism) of the UN. But most disturbing is the participation and acquiescence in such activity on the part of many of the European nations which, by their actions or inaction, were complicit in the Holocaust. As to the underdeveloped nations of the world, all of which are represented in the General Assembly, one would hope that they would look to Israel as a country from which they could learn and that they would wish to emulate. Virtually all of the countries created after WWII, most of them in Africa, have regressed socially, politically, economically, and in virtually all other respects since freeing themselves from their colonial condition. Millions and millions have died in fratricidal wars. Millions have died of starvation and millions are condemned to die by famine and by AIDS. Instead of condemning and hating Israel, they should take it as an example of how to build an advanced, prosperous and competent nation.

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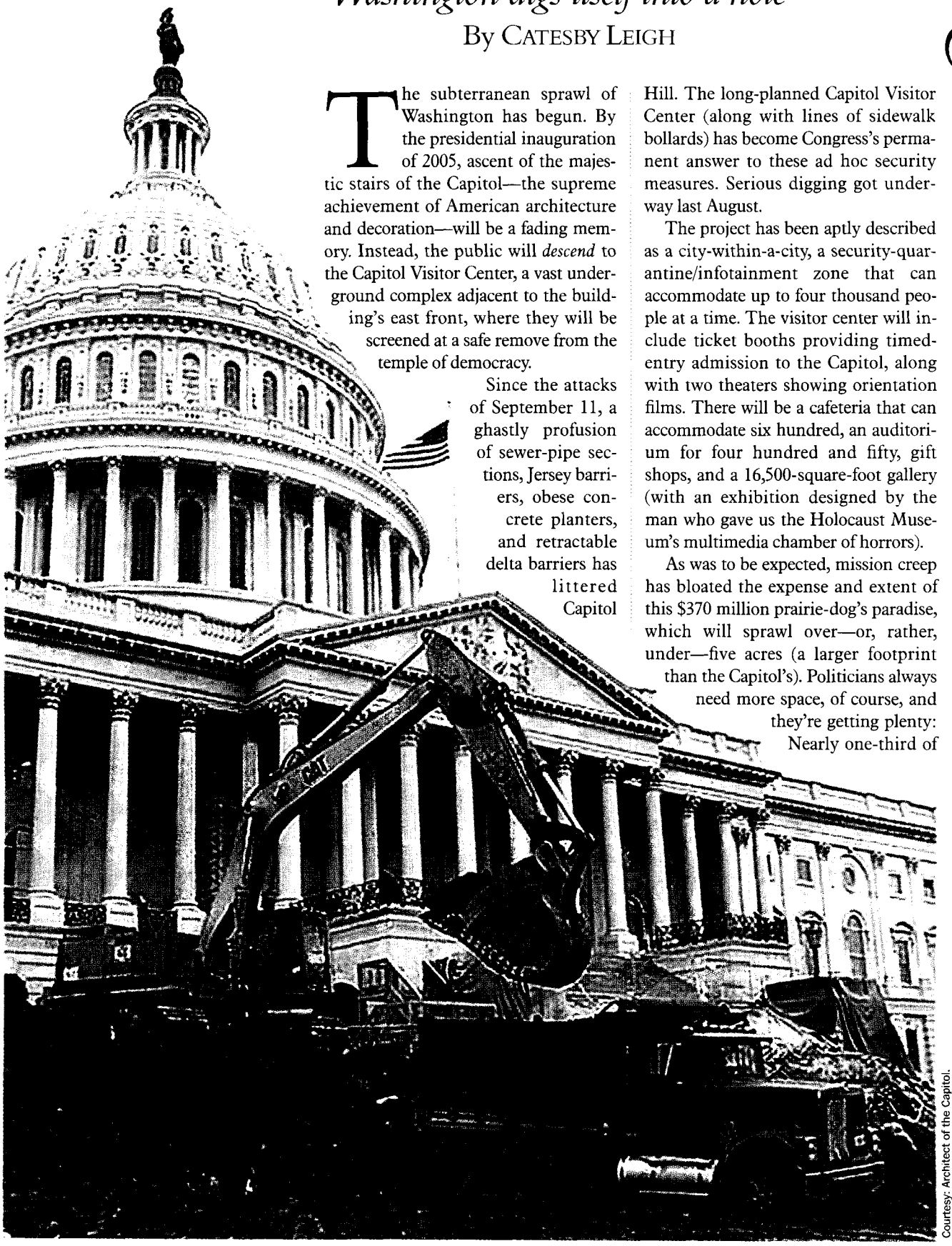
Subterranean Blues

Washington digs itself into a hole

By Catesby Leigh



Courtesy: Architect of the Capitol.

The subterranean sprawl of Washington has begun. By the presidential inauguration of 2005, ascent of the majestic stairs of the Capitol—the supreme achievement of American architecture and decoration—will be a fading memory. Instead, the public will *descend* to the Capitol Visitor Center, a vast underground complex adjacent to the building's east front, where they will be screened at a safe remove from the temple of democracy.

Since the attacks of September 11, a ghastly profusion of sewer-pipe sections, Jersey barriers, obese concrete planters, and retractable delta barriers has littered Capitol Hill. The long-planned Capitol Visitor Center (along with lines of sidewalk bollards) has become Congress's permanent answer to these ad hoc security measures. Serious digging got underway last August.

The project has been aptly described as a city-within-a-city, a security-quarantine/infotainment zone that can accommodate up to four thousand people at a time. The visitor center will include ticket booths providing timed-entry admission to the Capitol, along with two theaters showing orientation films. There will be a cafeteria that can accommodate six hundred, an auditorium for four hundred and fifty, gift shops, and a 16,500-square-foot gallery (with an exhibition designed by the man who gave us the Holocaust Museum's multimedia chamber of horrors).

As was to be expected, mission creep has bloated the expense and extent of this $370 million prairie-dog's paradise, which will sprawl over—or, rather, under—five acres (a larger footprint than the Capitol's). Politicians always need more space, of course, and they're getting plenty: Nearly one-third of

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the big dig's 580,000 square feet will contain underground briefing and conference rooms, House and Senate intelligence committee offices, and television studios. All in all, the Capitol Visitor Center promises to be a typical official architectural undertaking—typical, that is, of the modern curatorial mentality, which seems to regard the great buildings of Washington as archaeological specimens rather than as expressions of a living artistic tradition.

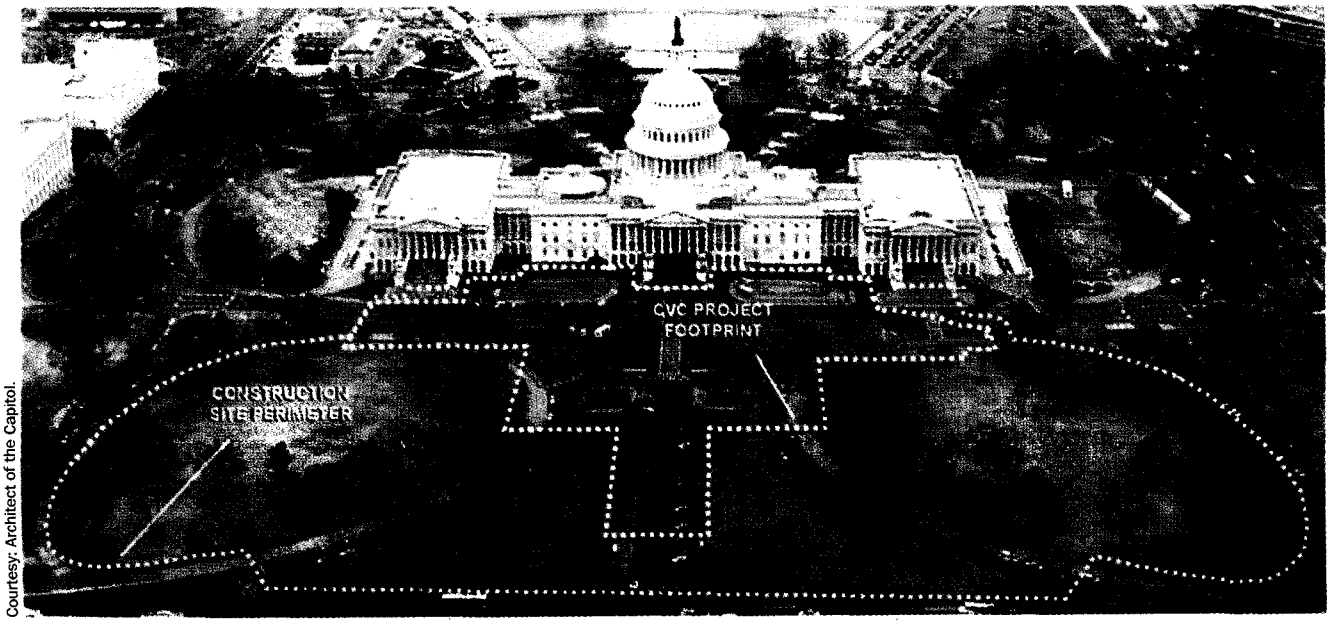
Misguided art-historical, documentary-educational, and preservationist dogmas all contributed their mite to the design of the Capitol Visitor Center. But a sheer lack of cultural confidence may be the principal factor behind this disaster in the making. What does it say of us that our first impulse these days is not to raise a building but to dig a hole? We doubt contemporary designers' ability to make a significant contribution to a truly great building like the Capitol, and we mistrust their ability to adjust Frederick Law Olmsted's surrounding landscape of terraces, greensward, and trees to an appropriately modified architectural composition.

That might make sense, if the tortured geometries currently being proposed for ground zero in Manhattan—and for the Corcoran Gallery addition in Washington—were our only option. But what of classical architecture in the grand manner? Believing that our connection with traditional architectural idioms is somehow irrevocably broken, we are treating Washington's foremost classical landmarks like rarefied artifacts—so fragile as to be accessible only by way of tunnels and skylit caverns. This formaldehyde formula is unworthy of a nation with any claim to a serious cultural life.

Subterranean sprawl is hardly limited to the Capitol. It poses a clear and present danger to some of the most precious tracts of Washington's monumental core, which includes the Mall and its environs. Other underground projects in the neighborhood include the National Park Service's plan for a Washington Monument Visitor Center (complete with a long, subterranean corridor to the obelisk's interior) and a Park Service proposal for a largely underground White House "museum and education center" at the nearby Commerce Department building. Meanwhile, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund aims to create a sunken visitor center, to be located between Frederick Hart's sculpture of the three soldiers and the Lincoln Memorial precinct.

The Washington Monument scheme rivals the Capitol Visitor Center in perversity. Over the last thirty years, the Park Service has offered one proposal after another for construction of such a facility. In 1993, review panels—meaning the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Planning Commission—"approved an underground visitor facility. At that time it had nothing to do with security," says the Park Service's John Parsons. "It would provide a better understanding of the monument and the man. Also, having people waiting around in the heat and the cold didn't seem like the proper way to host our guests." Roughly four years ago, the tunnel was added to the package. The quarantine routine, in short. In the decade since 1993, the Park Service has had difficulty funding the project, but "9/11 changed everything," as Parsons puts it. The bad idea of digging up the Mall suddenly gained prestige when it could be presented as part of a terrorism prevention package.

The latest Park Service proposal, which comes before the planning commission on January 9, is focused on the dignified little classical lodge located five hundred feet east of the Washington Monument, facing 15th Street, which was built with stone left over from the great obelisk's construction. The lodge, beneath which the visitor center was to be excavated under the 1993 scheme, is presently a film and souvenir shop with restrooms. An ugly



Courtesy: Architect of the Capitol.

An outline of the space beneath which the Capitol Visitor Center will sit.

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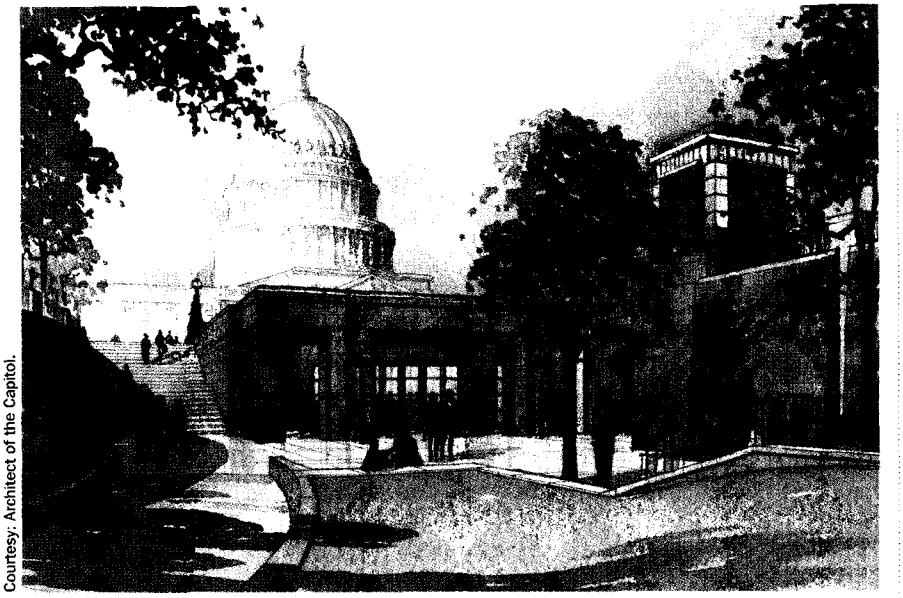

Courtesy: Architect of the Capitol.

The architect's rendering of an entrance to the visitor center.

snack-bar shed is tacked onto the rear. The Park Service no longer proposes to dig under the lodge. It wants to renovate it, remove the shed, and build a new addition housing a security-screening room, a stairway and elevators to the underground facility, and a pair of secure exits.

This addition is now conceived as a sort of scaled-down rendition of I.M. Pei's glass-and-metal pyramid at the Louvre (a minimalist entry pavilion to a stark sunken concourse). Admittedly, the truncated pyramid is slightly less preposterous than the previous design by the Park Service's architects, Hartman-Cox, which resembled the front portion of a glass cabin cruiser with a sunken masonry hull sticking out the back of the lodge. Such schemes conform to the harebrained preservationist dogma of historical correctness, which stipulates that an addition to an old building should be readily distinguishable—for documentary rather than esthetic purposes—as well as "of its time," meaning stylistically "contemporary" and, in all likelihood, ugly.

The visitor-center plan also inserts a sixty-foot-long tapering tunnel skylight in the Washington Monument landscape, thus affording a view of the obelisk from the underground facility, where visitors will have access to exhibits, restrooms, and a bookstore while they wait for their timed-entry admittance via the corridor to a sunken elevator lobby. The corridor will offer photographic vistas of the monument grounds during a July 4 celebration and the like. The proposed lodge addition and skylight are completely inappropriate to the Washington Monument and its setting, and the scheme has run into stiff opposition from the Commission of Fine Arts. But Congress may well have this white elephant built anyway.

On the other hand, the Park Service's Washington Monument plan includes a reasonable security-oriented landscape design. Conceived by Philadelphia landscape architect Laurie Olin, it consists of low, unobtrusive granite-faced walls integrated with a network of paths configured as two interlocking ovals embraced by a third, with the network centered on a circular stone-paved plaza around the obelisk. Together with retractable bollards placed at a few strategic junctures, the walls would prevent vehicles from venturing within four hundred feet of the monument.

A berm would face the low wall on the monument's western flank so the wall would not disrupt views of the landscape from that direction. Apart from minor regrading, no change in the landscape east of the monument will be necessary. (The sooner Olin's design rids the monument of its current double-ring of Jersey barriers—those interlocking concrete slabs which usually serve as median walls along turnpikes and freeways—the better.)

While this landscape plan might not be the whole security solution, the Park Service's obsession with distance-screening could end up increasing risk. Don Hawkins, an architect and member of the watchdog "Committee of 100 on the Federal City," notes that hundreds of people could be trapped in the underground visitor facility in the event of a terrorist assault, while only around seventy-five could be expected to be in the monument. A sensible alternative, Hawkins maintains, would be to locate the screening operation in the small vestibule at the east entrance to the monument, with a security door between the vestibule and the elevator lobby. (This would rid the monument of the wretched little pillbox of a screening facility presently marring its east façade.) The old west entrance, presently walled in, would be reopened as an exit with secure doors on each side of *its* vestibule, so that only one door would be open at a time.

It's a simple solution—far too simple for the Park Service, which caught the prairie-dog fever decades ago. After all, these are the folks who gave us "The Pit"—the humongous cavity dug smack in the middle of the marble floor in Union Station's grand concourse a quarter-century ago. The Pit, as it was commonly known, was the centerpiece of an utterly calamitous and extremely expensive conversion of Daniel Burnham's great Roman railway station into a Park Service-administered National Visitor Center, conceived as the tourist gateway to the nation's capital, and to which unattractive new train-station facilities were tacked on as if an afterthought.

The Pit boasted what bureaucratic visionaries called a "Primary Audio-Visual Experience" consisting of a nine-minute blitzkrieg of 5,500 slides of Washington projected onto a hundred panels on an enormous concave screen to the sound of the Star-Spangled Banner and other melodies. On the inauguration day of the "experience"—July 4, 1976, the nation's bicentennial—the slide-projection system malfunctioned, and The Pit closed ignominiously two

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years later. During the 1980s, Union Station was removed from Park Service jurisdiction and redeveloped.

From a design standpoint, the fundamentally *un*architectural character of subterranean sprawl is what's most noteworthy. The Capitol Visitor Center entrance is fairly innocuous, and its configuration is essentially a landscape exercise. Indeed, the maximum possible fidelity to Olmsted's landscape design and preservation, whenever possible, of trees removed from the visitor center construction site are high priorities. The entrance is approached by pairs of gently inclined paths flanking a ground-level promenade. The promenade, an extension of the East Capitol Street axis, leads to the plaza that will replace the parking lot in front of the Capitol. The descending paths either follow the contours of the egg-shaped plots Olmsted situated on each side of the promenade, or run straight alongside it, converging at the sunken visitor center entrance. (On the pavement above, the architect's renderings show inappropriate boxy structures housing elevators for the handicapped.)

Visitors are screened on the entrance level, then descend into a "Great Hall," where the ticket booths will be located, and from which they will proceed to the various displays and diversions before entering the Capitol. The Great Hall's ceiling will be thirty feet high and will include two huge, thirty-by-seventy-foot skylight panels—again, located to each side of the promenade that runs above—offering views of the Capitol dome. The Great Hall will be clad in sandstone similar to the Capitol rotunda's, but renderings indicate its architectural décor will be another tawdry exercise in pidgin classical—that ineptly articulated, lifeless, "modern" classicism that has plagued official Washington for decades. (The Rayburn House Office Building is a prime example.)

The Great Hall's architectural sterility may be mitigated by the display of Capitol artifacts. But here, and to a still greater degree in the case of the large exhibition gallery, the documentary preoccupations widely shared by a rapidly propagating and essentially parasitic curatorial class eager to "interpret" our monuments for us will have a deadening effect on Americans' experience of the Capitol.

Must the presentation of Washington's great monuments be calibrated to the all-too-brief attention spans nurtured by television and video games? Must computerized monitors posted at proposed new entryways to the White House precinct add the spice of "interactivity," along with the inevitable frustration of frequent breakdowns, to our visits?

In the "Comprehensive Design Plan" for the White House and President's Park published by the National Park Service in 2000, one encounters such buzzwords as "interpret," "interpretive tools," "interpretive activities," "interpretive media," ad nauseam—particularly in connection with a $57 million multimedia White House "museum and education center." Having mastered the semiotics of history and culture, the curatorial types and the tour guides they instruct must "interpret" artifacts like the Capitol, Washington Monument, and White House for the clueless masses.

The White House, in fact, already has a visitor center on Pennsylvania Avenue, just across 15th Street from the Ellipse, which occupies a handsome and spacious ground-floor Commerce Department room that was once a patent-research library. (For many visitors to Washington, this facility must substitute, for the time being, for a White House tour, because only students, active-duty servicemen, and veterans have been allowed inside—on tours arranged by congressmen—since September 14, 2001.) Unsurprisingly, the Park Service wants to burrow two floors under this center to create a sixty-thousand-square-foot complex containing theaters, a shop, a lab, research facilities, storage rooms, plus museum exhibitions and "educational rooms" equipped with the latest interactive gadgetry—and then construct a tunnel from this facility across 15th and E streets to a "vestibule" accommodating a stairway, escalator, and elevator to be dug just outside the White House's south fence.

The tunnel route has not been determined. And please don't call it a tunnel, says Ann Smith, the Park Service's White House liaison. She speaks instead of "an underground corridor with a moving sidewalk and skylights"—one wonders where on the Ellipse they will find a propitious spot for the latter—"and not anything that one would feel to be confining." In fact, she adds, "there would be a whole streetscape," which suggests that the participation of two Walt Disney Imagineering executives in the work-group meetings for the White House design plan didn't go for naught.

Driven by the familiar bureaucratic turf-expansion imperative, the curatorial class, which acts as though guidebooks and introductory brochures were somehow passé or at least radically inadequate, just can't leave well enough alone. Three decades ago, the Park Service disfigured the lower portion of Richard Morris Hunt's superb Statue of Liberty pedestal in New York Harbor by adding two broad plinth-like terraces, one recessed above the other, that originally enclosed an American Museum of Immigration, along with a small Statue of Liberty exhibit. When nearby Ellis Island underwent restoration during the 1980s in order to serve, appropriately, as the venue for an immigration museum, the Park Service, instead of restoring the statue's pedestal to its original state, installed a—you guessed it—Statue of Liberty museum. This museum (currently closed for security reasons) is devoted to the process of the statue's design and construction as well as a gaggle of banal documentary themes such as a "Century of Souvenirs," "The Image Exploited," and "The Statue in Popular Culture."

The last thing Lady Liberty needs is a museum to speak for her. What's more, we can appreciate the Washington Monument without the benefit of subterranean exhibits explaining "the monument and the man." We might even appreciate it more if we entered it at ground level like human beings rather than scuttling in through a tunnel like rats (as Vincent Scully might say). Indeed, the experience might even

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be worth braving "the heat and the cold." And the Vietnam memorial experience would hardly be enhanced by strolling through a chamber housing a jungle-warfare diorama, heated and humidified to a sweltering but historically accurate degree (a visitor-center feature now under consideration).

The point is that a visit to Washington is *already* an emotional experience, grounded primarily in classical architecture's powerful symbolism and profoundly anthropomorphic character—and it should stay that way. In the Capitol rotunda, with its soaring dome and rich decoration, in Latrobe's magnificent old House chamber (now Statuary Hall), in the Senate halls and committee and reception rooms covered with Brumidi's sumptuous murals—and now closed, like Bulfinch's fine old Senate chamber, to the public—one unconsciously imbibes the classical unity of beauty, truth, and goodness.

This is the experience that the Capitol Visitor Center will seriously compromise. Though the facility is intended to "orient" visitors, it will end up disorienting them—robbing the act of entrance of its monumental significance, funneling visitors up a stairway flanked by escalators and burrowed under the grand ascent to the central porch. Entering the Capitol will be like exiting a glitzy subway station.

Courtesy: Hartman-Cox Architects and Vladislav Yeliseyev.

The architect's rendering of the proposed tunnel to the Washington Monument.

Moreover, it is odd to hear Washington insiders speak admiringly of the subterranean galleries in the African and Asiatic art museums in the Smithsonian precinct on Independence Avenue, not to mention Pei's Louvre pavilion, all reached by downward-winding stairs. What has become of that instinctive sense of the primacy of the architectural experience of ascent? This primacy was no secret to Latrobe or his successor Thomas U. Walter or even that sylvan romantic Olmsted, each of whom designed tremendous exterior stairways at the Capitol.

Were you to tell a Greek or Roman or Renaissance architect that our World War II Memorial—the Mall's monument to America's greatest military contest—will consist primarily of a plaza sunk six feet deep, he would think you were joking. The erection of a building conceived as a "non-object"—as with the proposed "see-through" glass-and-mirrors entry pavilion to the Vietnam memorial visitor center—would utterly mystify him. A huge subterranean appendage like the Capitol Visitor Center could only provoke disbelief. Indeed, the Capitol and Washington Monument visitor center designs read as unwitting memorials to Timothy McVeigh and al Qaeda. And whether they really will lay security concerns to rest, or simply introduce new ones, remains an open question.

Let's pretend Congress suddenly regains its sanity while the Capitol Visitor Center remains little more than a gaping hole in the ground and rethinks this pharaonic fiasco. Secure underground meeting and briefing rooms are the dream of all official Washington these days, and they are going to get built somewhere in the Capitol's vicinity. So, go ahead and dig the legislative bunker, but skip the Great Hall, the auditorium, the theaters, cafeteria, and big gallery. Let the Capitol itself serve as the great exhibit.

The key to a new, secure public entrance might well lie in Latrobe's unrealized plan of 1811 for a grand pediimented gateway complex, or propylaeum, for the west front of the Capitol. Such a gateway could endow the lower portion of that front with a monumental scale lacking in Olmsted's terraces, gorgeous though they are. Behind the propylaeum, whose massive, heavily rusticated stonework would testify metaphorically to its "hardened" screening facility, would lie an enclosed court with grand flights of stairs—perhaps Olmsted's could be retained—leading up to the terrace directly beneath Bulfinch's portico.

Indeed, our leading classical architects—including the Philadelphians John Blatteau and Alvin Holm—should have been invited by the architect of the Capitol to study this problem at the outset. Instead, an unexceptional corporate firm, RTKL Associates, was retained as a result of its work on

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perimeter security that merged with the Capitol Visitor Center project. There was no competition or solicitation of alternative conceptual schemes for this tremendous commission.

Monumental Washington is also threatened with lots of unfortunate little changes on security grounds. To establish an adequate blast perimeter, the Park Service wants to eliminate on-site public parking at the relatively remote Jefferson Memorial. Visitors' vehicles will be routed to a lot a few minutes' walk away, which will surely be the end of most nighttime visits to the memorial, even if the lighting at the off-site lot is beefed up. So much for one of those little amenities that enriches Washington.

Likewise, the Urban Design and Security Plan for the city, an effort coordinated by the National Capital Planning Commission, proposes a row of granite bollards at the foot of the stairs to the Lincoln Memorial. They will almost certainly be installed. Must security-oriented design really be so ham-handed? At least the preliminary streetscape design for the 1600 block of Pennsylvania Avenue, indefinitely closed to traffic since the Oklahoma City bombing, is unobtrusive—but it's also pedestrian (in both senses) and insignificant. If for security reasons this block must be closed—with streetscape alterations, however, permitting its eventual reopening—why can't it be redesigned to contribute to the grandeur of monumental Washington, as with the *pro bono* classical scheme offered by Franck Lohsen McCrery, Architects?

The short answer is that official Washington has long since ceased to reach for new grandeur in the capital's monumental core. It merely aims at establishing *cordons sanitaires* against terrorist fanatics, preserving the archaeological integrity of "historic vistas" and "cultural landscapes," avoiding litigation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, and commissioning the occasional modernist architectural misadventure. How unworthy of the most prosperous, most powerful nation in human history. How unworthy of the capital of the free world. ♦

History and Horror

What made the Holocaust?

BY JACK FISCHEL

In recent decades thousands of books and articles about the Holocaust have been published. Practically every conceivable aspect of the tragedy has been researched and analyzed, and the question arises as to what is left to be discovered about one of the most investigated subjects in the entire field of historiography. The new history of the Holocaust by Deborah Dwork, Rose professor of Holocaust history at Clark University, and Robert Jan van Pelt, professor of cultural history in the School of Architecture at the University of Waterloo, puts this concern to rest. Framing the Holocaust in the context of World War II and the Nazi objectives of establishing a new order in Europe, the authors provide us with a perspective that departs from previous studies on the Jewish genocide.

Holocaust: A History
by Deborah Dwork
and Robert Jan van Pelt
W.W. Norton, 480 pp., $27.95

Although Dwork and van Pelt find harbingers of the Holocaust in the massacre of some 10,000 Jews in the wake of the First Crusade and the Medieval church's annihilation of "heretics," they dismiss the argument that there is a straight line from traditional anti-Judaism to the racially motivated genocidal anti-Semitism of the Nazis. Rather, they view the excesses of the "Terror" phase of the French Revolution as the precedent for not only the Holocaust, but also for the millions murdered under Stalin. The French Revolutionaries, led by "idealists" such as Robespierre, believed that the French aristocracy were obstacles to social and political change, thus justifying their execution. By killing thousands of aristocrats in the name of a better world, the revolutionaries established a precedent for the murder of groups seen as impediments to progress. The Terror, contend the authors, foreshadowed Stalin's murder of the kulaks, whom he perceived as opponents of collectivization, and Hitler's extermination of the Jews, whom he perceived as a barrier to a racial utopia.

Why the Jews? Anti-Semites of the early twentieth century were influenced by the ideas of nineteenth-century racial writers such as Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Wagner's son-in-law and the leading proponent of racial anti-Semitism, who contended that European history was shaped by the struggle between the Nordic (Aryan) and Semitic races. In Chamberlain's telling, the Nordic races had proved successful on the battlefield against the likes of the Persians, Carthage, and the Ottoman Empire, but the Semites had triumphed in one crucial respect: They had imposed Christianity, a Semitic religion, on the Nordic peoples of Europe. Hitler's forerunners were determined to undo this Semitic influence on the Nordic races, even if this meant eliminating Christianity or educating the masses to believe that Jesus was an Aryan and not a Jew. The restoration of a nation—bound by blood, soil, and the pre-Christian religion of the Aryan people—became a primary objective of the Nazis. Jews not only had no place in this idealized racial utopia, but were depicted as par-

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asites who polluted the blood and cultural fabric of the *Volk*. For racial nationalists like Chamberlain and the *Völkisch* movement's Dietrich Eckart, to whom Hitler dedicated *Mein Kampf*, the removal of the Jews from the German landscape was an obsession.

Along with Christianity, the Nazis rejected the tenets of the Enlightenment, which had led to the emancipation of the Jews in Western Europe. As the authors note, Hitler charged that the Jews used the ideals of the Enlightenment—equality of citizens before the law, freedom of conscience and religion, freedom of the press, constitutional government, and so on—"as wedges to dissolve the old bonds that had ensured stability. . . . The chaos they thus created prepared society for Bolshevism." Hitler equated Bolshevism with Judaism, much as the medieval world equated the Jews with the devil, and he believed that their removal from German society was necessary if the nation was to fulfill its historic destiny of creating a racial utopia. The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 marked the initial attempt to segregate Jews from German society, and subsequent policies aimed to remove them from the planet. Indeed, as the authors note, Hitler warned that if the Nuremberg Laws did not end "Jewish agitation both within Germany and the international sphere," he would be forced to find "a final solution" to the "Jewish Problem." This was the first mention of the infamous term that became a euphemism for the Holocaust.

Although historians have established the uniqueness of the Jewish genocide, they have struggled to explain the motive behind the deaths of the five to six million "others" annihilated by the Nazis. Dwork and van Pelt, however, succeed at documenting how such deaths were not only contemplated in Nazi war plans, but considered acceptable and militarily necessary. Convinced that severe food shortages on the home front had contributed to Germany's defeat in World War I, the Nazis concluded that "any means to that end was justified. . . . Germans needed the food and their foes could starve to death." The result was a policy that made tens of millions of Slavs superfluous. The Nazis reasoned that "efforts to save the [Slavic] population from starving to death by bringing in surplus food from the black soil region of Russia can only be made at the expense of feeding Europe, and . . . would undermine Germany's ability to hold out in the war." The authors reveal that thousands of directives to this effect were distributed among civil servants and military personnel, implementing genocide for reasons of economy and geopolitics, rather than racial ideology.

Michael St. Maur / CORBIS

The railroad tracks to the concentration camp.

Jews, on the other hand, were targeted on racial grounds. The Nazi decision, following the occupation of Poland in 1939, to establish a "Jewish State," wherein some 3 million Jews would be thrust into the Lublin region, where they were doomed to die either from famine or frost, was tantamount to genocide. When the Nisko Plan was aborted, the next scheme was to resettle the Jews in Madagascar, where both the inhospitable climate and the lack of resources would similarly condemn them to death. Both proposals had as their end the annihilation of European Jewry, not, as some historians argue, simply the relocation of European Jewry. Thus, Hitler's wish to kill the Jews preceded his decision to mass-murder them once the invasion of the Soviet Union commenced in June 1941.

By Christmastime of that year, the Germans had officially abandoned the "territorial solution" to the "Jewish Problem," and turned to their direct annihilation. The murder of six million Jews, including men, women, and children, could not have occurred without the willing participation of German soldiers and their auxiliaries from various European countries who not only followed orders, but were constantly reminded of the righteousness of their murderous deeds. Nazi propaganda characterized Jews as typhus-bearing vermin who must be segregated, if not killed, lest they spread disease.

In Poland, as Jews were crowded into ghettos and deprived of not only food, but also soap, the Germans tried to transform Jews into the caricatures that Goebbels had depicted in such films of incitement as *The Eternal Jew* (1940). Jews were forced to exchange their warm clothes for old garments and, unable to wash properly, they became the shabby and apparently depraved subhumans portrayed in German propaganda for more than a decade.

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The unfolding Holocaust involved the entire bureaucracy of Nazi Germany. As the authors note, German bureaucrats "reveled in being small cogs in a great machine. . . . Technical competence, not moral responsibility, was valued by bureaucrats and administrators alike. No one valued the questions: 'Why are we doing this? Why should we do this?' And no one asked them." Yet by comparison with Romanians, the Nazis engaged in relatively "civilized" behavior when it came to killing Jews. The authors describe the Romanian massacres of Jews as "explosions of extreme violence, viciousness, and perverted sadism." Unlike the Germans, the Romanians lacked the technology of destruction that would guarantee the systematic murder of every last targeted Jew. Nevertheless, for three days, from January 21 to 23, 1941, the Romanian Iron Guard pillaged and sacked the Jewish quarter of Bucharest, destroying seven large synagogues and murdering hundreds. Mutilated corpses littered the city morgue, and "bodies hung like cattle carcasses in the municipal slaughterhouse. Smeared with blood, a girl of five hung from a hook by her feet like a calf." Nazi soldiers were shocked by the barbaric behavior of the Romanians. Heinrich Himmler, by contrast, prided himself on his civilized approach to the annihilation of the Jews. In fact, he claimed that everything his men did, they did in the name of civilization.

The gas chamber was Himmler's proudest achievement. Concerned that his troops would become savage neurotics because of the mass killing of their Jewish victims, Himmler constructed at Auschwitz-Birkenau a gas chamber and crematoria that worked in tandem. The result was a killing facility in which slave laborers handled the dead and burned the bodies in the crematoria, thus eliminating the necessity for the killers to face their prey. As Dwork and van Pelt write, "with so little direct contact between killer and victim, who could be held responsible? Everyone had an out: everyone can say what he did was not so important. And everyone did say it."

Toward the conclusion of this informative history, the authors make the observation that because of the Allied victory, some of those condemned to death never got caught in the German net. Yet some 80 percent of the Jews in Nazi Europe were annihilated by May 1945. Had the Allies not been victorious, or had victory come at a later time, many others the Germans had targeted for death would have been murdered. For those who survived the Holocaust, the Allied policy of "salvation with victory" was the only means by which they were able to outlast their tormentors. ♦

The Screen Sings

With Chicago, *Hollywood rediscovers the musical.* BY JOHN PODHORETZ

Chicago is the best American movie in years—restoring a moribund genre, the movie musical, to its rightful place as the most thrilling of all cinematic forms and returning the dazzling, dark, adult edge of 1970s Hollywood to American cinema.

The show was originally a Broadway musical, conceived by Bob Fosse, about murder and show business. The first thing director Rob Marshall and screenwriter Bill Condon did right in their movie version was to drain it of Fosse's flip nihilism. On Broadway, we were asked to laugh along with the "six merry murderesses of the Cook County Jail," who jokingly describe their crimes in a number called "The Cell Block Tango." On screen, the same number is genuinely macabre—frightening and powerful.

Unlike Fosse, who wanted to make a Point About The Evils of Celebrity, Marshall and Condon bring the story down to human scale. The movie *Chicago* touches on all the same themes, at times even more savagely than Fosse's show. But the irony doesn't overwhelm the tale. Marshall and Condon never let us forget that *Chicago* is ultimately the story of a killer desperate to save herself from the hangman's noose.

John Podhoretz is a columnist for the New York Post *and a contributing editor to* THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

In 1920s Chicago, Roxie Hart (played by Renée Zellweger) shoots a man after he tricks her into bed by promising to get her on the stage. The district attorney wants the death penalty, and a terrified Roxie gets her cuckolded auto-mechanic husband to pay $5,000 to a flimflam lawyer named Billy Flynn (Richard Gere).

Flynn's other client is a vaudeville headliner named Velma Kelly (Catherine Zeta-Jones), who killed her husband and sister after she found them together. Roxie meets Velma, whom she worships, in jail. Velma has no use for Roxie. But the tables turn when Roxie's fame behind bars begins to eclipse Velma's. Condon and Marshall bring Roxie, Velma, and Billy together in a climactic courtroom scene that features a plot twist worthy of that other great movie set in Chicago, *The Sting*.

The confidence and command that pop out at you from every frame are all the more astonishing because *Chicago* is the first feature film directed by Rob Marshall. Marshall is best known as a Broadway choreographer. He did a fine job refilming the musical *Annie* for television four years ago, but nothing in his career gave a hint of the supernatural talent he displays here as a visual stylist and cinematic storyteller.

Most of the song-and-dance numbers take place inside Roxie's vaudeville-obsessed fantasy life, into which she escapes from the dreary and terrifying precincts of the Cook County Jail.

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This structure could have become confusing, or cutesy, or annoyingly mannered (as it has been in similar films, such as *Pennies from Heaven*). But Marshall pulls it off effortlessly, in large measure because the wonderful songs by John Kander and Fred Ebb have a stylized quality that makes them seem almost dreamlike.

Marshall took great risks in casting, and those have paid off as well. Richard Gere looks like he stepped out of a rotogravure newspaper supplement and sings his part in a scratchy tenor that makes it sound as though he were being recorded on a 78-RPM platter. It's far and away his best work since *An Officer and a Gentleman* in 1982. The gorgeous Catherine Zeta-Jones has exuded sexuality but little else in her other screen roles. Here she practically bursts through the screen at you in a ferocious performance that displays her pretzel-like abilities as a dancer.

Gere and Zeta-Jones at least had musical stage experience (Gere on Broadway in the 1970s, Zeta-Jones in London in the 1980s). Renée Zellweger has never sung or danced professionally, but she outshines them both in work that suggests she—who in 2001 transformed herself into a dumpy Londoner for *Bridget Jones's Diary*—might be able to do just about anything if she puts her mind to it. Her Roxie is pathetic, delusional, cruel, and conniving, yet always fully human.

Despite the dark qualities of its plot and characters, *Chicago* is exhilarating in the way only a movie musical can be. From the time that Al Jolson inaugurated the talkie era by singing in 1927's *The Jazz Singer*, the movie musical was the most reliable moneymaker in Hollywood and the financial backbone of the most successful studio, Metro Goldwyn Mayer. Two musicals—*The Sound of Music* and *Grease*—remain among the ten highest-grossing movies ever made (in constant dollars). The musical was also Hollywood's pride and joy: Between 1951 and 1968, six musicals (*An American in Paris*, *Gigi*, *West Side Story*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Sound of Music*, and *Oliver*) won the Oscar for Best Picture.

So why did the movie musical fade away in the 1980s? It's become conventional wisdom to say that musicals stopped working because audiences became uncomfortable with the spectacle of performers turning toward the camera and bursting into song. But that doesn't really explain it. After all, audiences over the past twenty years have shown themselves perfectly willing to suspend their disbelief about other, far more ridiculous spectacles—

Catherine Zeta-Jones

Miramax

like Arnold Schwarzenegger or Sylvester Stallone escaping unscathed despite thousands of bullets being fired at him at point-blank range, or cars flying forty feet through the air, landing, and then driving off at top speed. If a car can fly, why can't a person sing and dance?

Musicals became obsolete in part because Hollywood began using their storytelling techniques to punch up other, more superficially exciting, genres like the action picture and the science-fiction epic. Those flying cars and dueling spaceships are the chorus lines of contemporary Hollywood. According to Joel Silver, who produced the four *Lethal Weapon* movies, a successful action film is made up of "whammoes." A "whammo," Silver says, is "an explosion, a car chase, a fight scene that keeps the audience interested." Silver's formula for success: "You've got to have a whammo every ten minutes." The whammo is really nothing more than a production number—with the sound of bullets being fired replacing the sound of tap shoes slamming against the floor. And just as a good action picture will have at least ten whammoes, a good musical must have at least ten numbers.

The effect of these cascading climaxes can be overpowering. Everyone knows the title number of *Singin' in the Rain*, universally considered the greatest Hollywood musical, in which a love-besotted Gene Kelly splashes around on a soggy Los Angeles street. But only five minutes before that, there's another heart-stopping number called "Good Mornin'," during which Kelly, Debbie Reynolds, and Donald O'Connor offer up an amazing display of synchronized tap-dancing. And five minutes before that, there's "Moses Supposes," in which Kelly and O'Connor turn a boring elocution lesson into a two-man comic riot. All that in just twenty minutes' screen time.

Chicago doesn't quite reach those heights—what other movie ever has?—but it does keep coming at you. The first twenty minutes leave you practically gasping for air. The opening number, with Zeta-Jones grabbing hold of the great Kander-Ebb song "All That Jazz," is followed by Zellweger's comic "Funny Honey," then hard along by "The Cell Block Tango." Then comes Queen Latifah, playing the jail warden, and channeling Sophie Tucker and Ma Rainey in a knockout rendition of "When You're Good to Mama." Finally, Gere dresses up as a shoeshine boy and does a triumphant striptease to the tune of "All I Care About (Is Love)."

Rob Marshall and Bill Condon have revitalized the movie musical, for which they should receive every type of award there is. They have certainly earned the thanks of anyone who wants to see a genuinely transporting movie without having to watch a lot of bad acting taking place aboard a spaceship. ♦

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"The self-help section—could you lead me there?"

Books in Brief

***Redneck Nation: How the South Really Won the War* by Michael Graham (Warner, 239 pp., $23.95).** The disaffected southerner Michael Graham once set off in search of the northern United States, that faraway land of competence and sophistication, but he wound up back home in the South. And why not? Hicks rule America from sea to shining sea, he concludes in *Redneck Nation*. Frustrated by the incessant belittling that southerners endure, Graham makes clear northerners deserve just as much ridicule for their red necks.

For an example, take education, an issue on which northerners have long claimed superiority. While there are certainly enclaves of substantial learning in, say, the Upper East Side, the worst public school systems in the country are in Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Washington (a city Graham sloughs off on the North because, as he writes, nobody wants it). Graham's similar argument about northern hypocrisy over race still stands, though on a wobblier leg than it did before Trent Lott's gaffe. "The first fighters in the modern multicultural wars were the white Southerners of the 1960s," he insists, whereas citizens of the North who once espoused the melting pot paradigm now trumpet the principles of racial preferences and racial determinism.

Graham, a radio talk show host in Washington, D.C., also draws less obvious parallels between North and South. The distinctly northern anti-meat campaign by militant vegetarians is merely "redneck evangelicalism wrapped in radicchio and served on a bed of kelp."

Redneck Nation does not naively suggest that there are no real differences between North and South, just that everything once perceived as a southern fault—claims to victim status, poor educational standards, trampy women, mindless entertainment—has crept across the map to become our national standard.

—Beth Henary

***Are Cops Racist? How the War Against the Police Harms Black Americans* by Heather Mac Donald (Ivan R. Dee, 177 pp., $22.50).** To hear many on the Left describe it, America's police departments are made up of men ready to kill just about any African American who crosses them.

In *Are Cops Racist?* Heather Mac Donald tries to answer the chorus of accusations of racism in law enforcement.

The book consists of nine essays, all but one of which first appeared in the Manhattan Institute's *City Journal*. Each essay deals with race and law enforcement, although a few—such as an excellent piece on the 2001 Cincinnati riots—go well beyond. Individually, the essays are models of opinion journalism: Mac Donald is meticulous, even-handed, and absolutely devastating to those who make unfounded charges of racism against the police.

As good as the individual essays are, however, the book suffers from a lack of editorial oversight. Aside from a very brief introduction, the essays appear to have been printed exactly as they appeared in *City Journal*: There's some repetition and a few annoying errors an editor should have caught.

Are Cops Racist? focuses heavily on the New York City Police Department. While NYPD is the largest and most imitated agency in the country, the city's unique character and the agency's size—NYPD's traffic division alone employs more officers than all but five other municipal agencies—make it a problem as a model for other police departments.

While Mac Donald's writing delivers one of the best ever looks at NYPD, the national implications of some of her conclusions are limited. A very good essay on the New York Police academy, for example, has real implications only for the handful of cities that have enormous police agencies and similarly divisive racial politics.

Still, *Are Cops Racist?* draws a lot of very good journalism together, and it's well worth reading.

—Eli Lehrer

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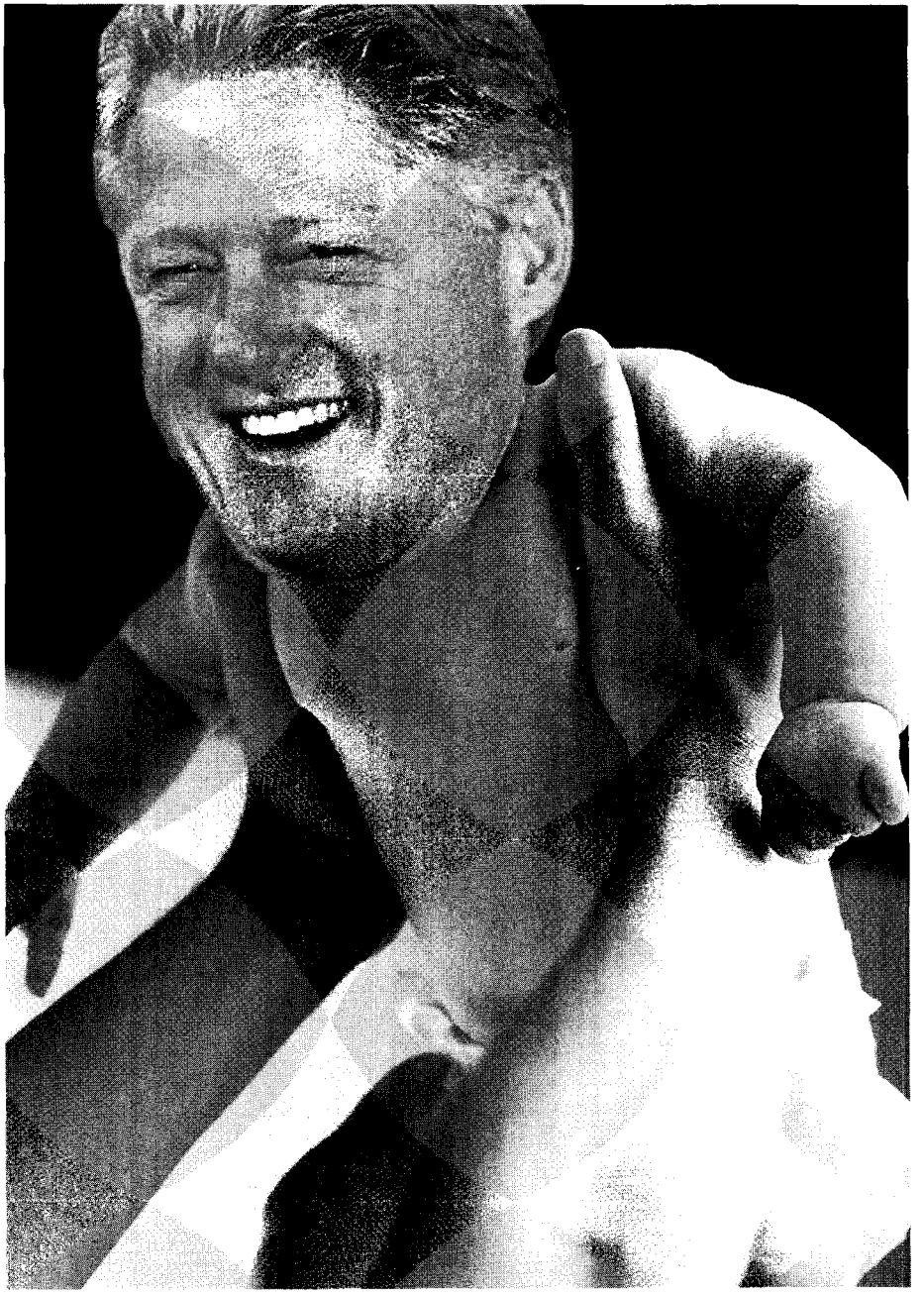
Raelians Release Photo of Baby Clone



GENEVA, SWITZERLAND– The Raelian cult has released further information on what its spokesmen claim is the first human clone. The group, which is committed to open marriage, self-love, and immediate gratification, still has not released the name of the individual who was allegedly cloned. But sources report that an artificial womb was implanted in a volunteer named Sidney Blumenthal. The baby was then surgically extracted and is being raised by a village of women and enablers. Thus far the infant seems perfectly normal except for a distinguishing characteristic in a private region and an incessant desire to breast feed.

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Getting Ahead of the Biowarfare Threat

Bruce Berkowitz is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution and author of the forthcoming book *The New Face of War* (Free Press).

President Bush has approved a plan to inoculate 500,000 U.S. military personnel against smallpox. The president, as commander in chief, will be vaccinated along with the troops. He also plans to make the vaccine available to up to ten million public safety workers.

The White House fears terrorists or rogue states may resort to biowarfare. Developing the policy took months of deliberation. When you consider the issues involved, you can see why.

The smallpox vaccine (like many drugs) has side effects. Historically, the current vaccine has caused about one to two deaths per million recipients. Simple math suggests that this would total between 300 and 600 deaths if the entire American population were vaccinated.

Thus ordering a mass vaccination program is not a trivial decision. But Iraq, North Korea, and several terrorist groups are known to be exploring biological weapons. The United States needs a cadre of people who can respond to an attack.

Smallpox could be an especially gruesome weapon. It is highly contagious and kills about a third of those infected. Those who survive are usually scarred, and many are crippled or blinded. Before a vaccine was invented in 1796, smallpox often killed hundreds of thousands of people each year.

The disease was considered eradicated almost a quarter century ago. Today the only specimens of smallpox virus exist in labs in the United States and Russia—at least, the only *known* specimens.

And that's the problem. We must be prepared for the chance that somehow Iraq, North Korea, or Al Qaeda has been able either to steal a sample of the virus or found some specimen that managed to escape eradication.

U.S. leaders today must deal with threats that are ambiguous, debatable, hard to verify but that could amass huge costs. Many other biological agents such as anthrax, Ebola, and plague could also be turned into weapons. Furthermore, many chemical, radiological, and nuclear weapons can be developed covertly.

The smallpox decision is the kind of complex national security calculation we can expect more of. Such decisions require public education, consensus building, and innovative thinking so as to limit risks without undo costs to the economy or burdens on the public. The most important ingredient, however, is leadership.

For years officials have expected the intelligence community to provide "actionable intelligence"—data so specific and unambiguous that the U.S. response would be obvious and unarguable. With today's threats, that is hard to provide and we should not expect it.

The best we can hope for is "inferential intelligence," whereby intelligence organizations indicate where the hard evidence leads and describe the possible threats that could result. Then officials must fill in the gray areas and decide how to respond.

September 11 showed what happens when you ignore an enemy abroad who threatens America. Taking action *before* an attack occurs may be the biggest—and most important—challenge of all.

— *Bruce Berkowitz*

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University

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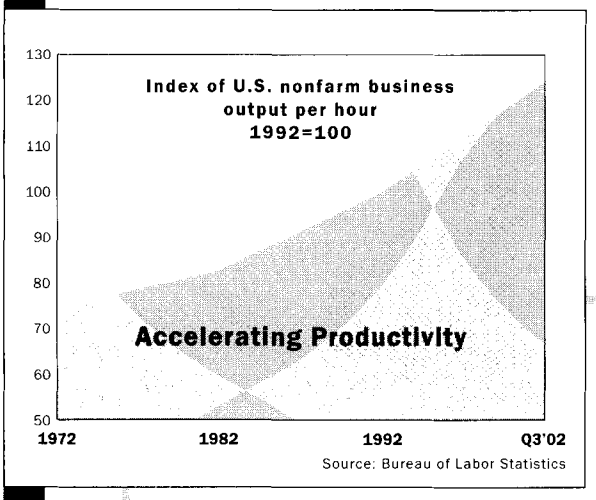

ALIVE AND KICKING

To borrow a phrase from Mark Twain, reports of the death of the digital economy are greatly exaggerated.

No question, the technology industry is growing more slowly today than in the go-go years of the late 1990s. But innovation continues to create new software and devices that are more powerful and easier to use. As the industry builds on its enormous cumulative growth of the past two decades, technology is becoming even more integral to our lives and indispensable to the economy.

As 2002 drew to a close, for example, computer makers were on track to ship about 127 million PCs for the year. While that is only a 2 percent increase over 2001, and slightly less than in the record year 2000, it is still more than in any two years up through 1995, and more than in all of the 1980s combined.

More people than ever have at least one PC in their home, and now most Americans are connected to the Internet. High-speed access is spreading, albeit faster in some other nations than in the United States. Still, in the first nine months of last year, another 4.3 million U.S. households signed up for broadband, which now serves one in four homes that have Internet access.

The ranks of online retailers seemed to be decimated after the dot-com bubble burst, yet e-commerce has grown steadily. E-tail sales in the U.S. totaled about $31 billion during the first nine months of 2002, an increase of 26 percent, compared with just a 4 percent rise in retail sales overall.

Meanwhile, the age of the personal computer is evolving into one of truly personal computing, with many small, connected devices for managing and sharing information. Some 25 million personal digital assistants were sold during the past two years. Since 1999, the number of people in the world with a mobile-phone connection has doubled, to more than one billion.

Clearly, high tech continues to play a vital economic role. Software and computer-services firms employ about 2.2 million U.S. workers, nearly twice as many as in 1995. Investment in business equipment and software, which turned higher again in mid-2002, contributed 13 percent of the growth in the American economy during the third quarter, according to government estimates.

Fundamental trends support an optimistic outlook for 2003, and beyond

And the wide use of technology is rewiring our economy, creating opportunities for people and businesses. Economists credit computers with adding to productivity gains that enable living standards to rise. Perhaps no other trend provides more cause for optimism than that the U.S. economy, through the third quarter, was on track to achieve its highest annual rate of growth in productivity in more than half a century.

And so, happy New Year.

One in a series of essays on technology and society. More information is available at microsoft.com/issues.

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